

Sewanee Review

VOL. XLIII

No. 4

OCTOBER-DECEMBER, 1935

Asides and Soliloquies the editor 385

Berry Picking Dr. Edward Quintard 393

An autumnal meditation on the delights of hunting blackberries. The author is a distinguished physician who lives in a delightful community in the Connecticut Berkshires: at Norfolk, Connecticut.

Physiology (poem) Arthur Link Newton 397

College Ideals of Sportsmanship Henry S. Pritchett 398

The President-emeritus of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching reminds the readers of this quarterly that education in the colleges and universities of this country is seriously menaced by the fantastic incubus of organized football. Football as a sport is ruined by the professional coaches who ruthlessly exploit both the game and the players for their own selfish aggrandizement and personal profit. Dr. Pritchett points the way to a solution and recommends the revival of the amateur spirit in football which is the only way to save it as a game and a sport.

Critic (poem) L. Robert Lind 405

More than Intelligence Arthur E. Morgan 406

This highly pertinent criticism of the direction of college teaching in America is written by the President of Antioch College, an engineer by profession, and at present one of the three directing minds of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Dr. Morgan's ideal of the educated man is an inspiring re-formulation of what many professional educators think.

Shelley Re-Appraised L. Robert Lind 413

Shelley's reputation, like that of many romantic poets, has suffered at the hands of American "Humanists" like Babbitt and More. The time has come for a reconsideration of Shelley's achievement without benefit of mechanical notions of criticism which the "Humanists" have encouraged. This has been accomplished in this essay by Dr. L. Robert Lind, Professor of Classics in Wabash College.

Mountain Twilight (poem).....James Still 435

Eugene O'Neill's SymbolismEdd Winfield Parks 436

The apparent disparity of themes and techniques in Eugene O'Neill's plays is only apparent: the underlying unity of his direction is indicated by the author of this essay in O'Neill's experimentations with various symbols. Edd Winfield Parks, formerly of Vanderbilt and Cumberland Universities, is now on the staff of the English Department of the University of Georgia.

Purpose (poem)Arthur Link Newton 451

The Analysis of LaughterHenry Alonzo Myers 452

As a sequel, with a different approach, of Julius Vexler's "The Essence of Comedy" which appeared in the last issue of this quarterly (July-September, 1935), Henry Alonzo Myers presents an analysis of laughter which questions Bergson's psychological and "social purge" doctrine. The author lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Observations on Metaphysical Imagery....Robert L. Sharp 464

This essay continues the series of analyses of poetic image and metaphor which the SEWANEE REVIEW has published during the last four years. It assists in the mediatory effort of interpreting current metaphysical turns in poetry. Mr. Sharp lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

T. S. Eliot on Matthew Arnold.....M. L. S. Loring 479

As the editor of this quarterly suggested, in his essay on Mr. Eliot entitled "Bellwether" (published in the SEWANEE REVIEW), Mr. T. S. Eliot is in direct line of continuance of Matthew Arnold. The author of the present essay clearly demonstrates that Mr. Eliot needlessly frets himself about Arnold: that he is Arnold's Redivivus.

Epicurus in PerigordCuthbert Wright 489

This review of Marvin Lowenthal's recently published "The Autobiography of Montaigne" (Houghton-Mifflin Co.) is a brilliant sketch of Montaigne by one of the most incisive and effective of the younger American critics.

BOOK REVIEWS:

Humanism and Dogma.....Everett Lee Hunt 499

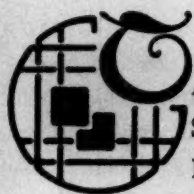
A Racy Life of Steele.....R. W. Babcock 496

British Culture in Russia.....W. E. Harrison 502

Novelist of Violence.....Lodwick Hartley 504

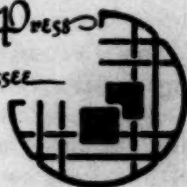
Stained Glass Attitudes.....S. Ichiye Hayakawa 507

History without Philosophy.....E. M. Kayden 511

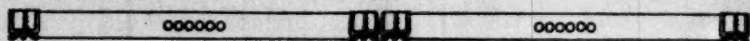


THE UNIVERSITY PRESS of
Sewanee Tennessee, the Printing
Plant of the University of the
South, is especially well equipped
for Collegiate and Ecclesiastical
Printing, Dissertations, Church
and Women's Club Year Books,
Brochures, and anything calling
for the exercise of the printer's
skill, judgment, and conscience.
Buyers interested in this kind of
printing are invited to write for
further details.

The University Press
Sewanee, Tennessee



Of Interest to Libraries



THE SEWANEE REVIEW is carrying on the best traditions of *The Southern Literary Messenger*, *De Bow's Review*, and other well-known literary journals of the Old South, and is playing an important rôle in helping to stimulate Southern thought and Southern letters. Its thirty-odd volumes form a rich storehouse of literary essays and literary criticism, ready access to which is to be had through the *International Index to Periodicals*.

Every library should strive to train the public in refined taste and critical appreciation. Especially during this time of storm and stress should libraries take advantage of our people's serious mood to encourage steadiness, soberness, and selectiveness in their reading,—habits which mean so much for enlightened minds and worthy character.

THE REVIEW goes into the following college and university libraries: Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Johns Hopkins, Columbia, Vermont, Tulane, Mississippi, Virginia, Florida, Davidson, Oberlin, Bryn Mawr, Washington and Lee, Leland Stanford, California, Kansas, Kentucky, Iowa, Amherst, Colorado, Minnesota, Missouri, Vassar, North Carolina, South Carolina, Indiana, Illinois, Louisiana, General Theological Seminary, Ohio State, Miami, Oregon, Wofford, Clemson, William and Mary, Washington State, Cornell, Vanderbilt, Texas, Alabama Polytechnic, Goucher, besides many other public, private, and Normal School libraries throughout the country.

Containing articles on varied topics of literary and educational interest contributed by men and women who write with authority and attractive style, THE SEWANEE REVIEW deserves a place in the reading-room of every school, college, and public library in the Nation.

YOUR LIBRARY *cannot afford to do without* THE SEWANEE REVIEW, *and we trust that you will send us your subscription without delay*

Address THE SEWANEE REVIEW
SEWANEE, TENNESSEE, U. S. A.

Subscription, \$3.00 the year.

Sewanee Review

[Founded 1892]

EDITED BY

WILLIAM S. KNICKERBOCKER

ASIDES AND SOLILOQUIES

ON October 3, 1935, the Right Reverend Thomas Frank Gailor, Bishop of Tennessee, died at his home in Sewanee, Tennessee.

In the fact, so simply and baldly stated, is a significance of some concern. Bishop Gailor was not only the first citizen of Tennessee but was, perhaps, the choice flower of the American prelacy. He was a spiritual aristocrat yet withal a very understanding and intelligent man. He had decided convictions but he was not impervious to changing emphases and to new ideas. The amiability of the man was not lost in nor separated from his dignity as a priest nor his authority as a Bishop. Still, he was the epitome of the patriarchal idea of the prelacy which the American Church tenaciously preserved from its Anglican patrimony. The incipient Toryism of its colonial days was piously transmitted through the nineteenth century and, though alien to the broadening democracy of the republic, gave American culture that necessary resistance of conservatism which has saved us from the always threatening débâcle of ochlocracy.

Bishop Gailor was the finest type of the benevolent paternalist; tolerant of divergent views and policies in Church and State he was not always successful in withstanding his own power to execute, in moments of crisis, what he alone believed to be right.

His greatness resulted from his ability to command respect, esteem, veneration—and even love. In his lamented death there passed the embodiment of the benevolent paternalist as prelate in the American Church. The old order changeth and giveth place to new. The democratization of the American Church lies in the promise of his successor, the Rt. Rev. James M. Maxon.

The SEWANEE REVIEW appropriately pays tribute to Bishop Gailor. He was one of the most active minds concerned with the founding and continuance of this quarterly. Coming to Sewanee in 1882, as Chaplain and Professor of English, he has remained continually and consistently a part of its community as Vice-Chancellor and Chancellor of the UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH. He fought side by side with the first editor of the SEWANEE REVIEW, William Peterfield Trent, in a day when freedom of expression and courage in thinking independently was hazardous in the South. He encouraged and inspired Mr. Trent to persist in his struggle when powerful and invisible forces strenuously operated to remove Mr. Trent as editor of the SEWANEE REVIEW and Professor of English in the UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH. Now that that sinister day has passed, the reason that it has passed is explained largely by the faithful and unrelenting insistence upon fair play and justice which was always nearest Bishop Gailor's heart. Not once has the present editor had to call for help from that high quarter but he has always known that if it were necessary the help would be forthcoming, if the plea were soundly based, honest, and forthright. Not a Churchman myself, I found ready invigoration on those occasions when, in a spirit of lassitude or discouragement or vacuity of mind, I called upon him to hear him talk. I came to love him. And I miss him greatly.

FROM February to the end of June, 1935, the editor of this Quarterly was Visiting Professor at the English Universities of Liverpool and of Manchester, and at the Scottish University of Aberdeen, under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The reception he received in those great centers of learning was a tribute of the honor in which Americans are regarded by British scholars. It is meet and proper to record the hope mentioned by many of them for closer mutual study and coöperation of each of these two great English-speaking nations.

He had been in Great Britain before, this particular passionate pilgrim, but only in the private capacity of research student and lover of the British way of life. To go armed with letters of introduction to distinguished prelates, statesmen, journalists, poets, novelists and in an official capacity as Ambassador of good-will-at-large was the greatest experience of his professional career. To be in Manchester—which he probably never would have visited otherwise—for two of the bleakest months in the Manchester calendar was a revelation. We—the lady, off-spring number one and the monologist—donned the long-forsaken woolly underwear in blizzardy Boston on January 19 (nobody ever wears woolies in sunny Sewanee!) and kept them until the spring interrim when we fled to Cornwall and Devon only to resume them, in spite of the intervals of sunshine, in Aberdeen in May. And blessings be on the woosack for the suit of woolen armor bought for six guineas in Manchester (duly, as well as courageously, declared at Boston Customs on Sunday morning, June 30!): they protected the limbs which otherwise would have shivered disgracefully in the so-called centrally-heated private hotels in which this Important Personage lodged. (Ah! the memory of crawling between clammy sheets at night and during the day hovering before timid gas-fires in what ought to have been hearths!)

The temptation to indulge in an extended reverie, narrating the adventures of an amiable soul in Britain from the Waverly by-election, through the times in which Sir Anthony Eden hopped about Europe, the wonderful Jubilee, the re-appearance of Lloyd George with his British version of the New Deal, the surreptitious Nicodemus visits to Great Men (among others, his sensation-monger kinsman of the same name who works for Mr. Hearst, philosophers like S. Alexander, writers like J. A. Spender and Francis Hirst, critics like T. S. Eliot) is great but must be resisted. (It is all conscientiously recorded in a gratuitous report deposited in New York with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace). The rest is silence (except for those enterprizing, curious, and generous souls who, on reading this, obey their impulse to enter a subscription to the SEWANEE REVIEW. They will get a letter, written by the passionate pilgrim himself to show his appreciation of their concern and interest.)

WITH this issue the present editor completes his first ten years in his office. He is proud to report that, without endowment and without advertising, he has secured sufficient subscriptions to secure the continued publication of this oldest of American Quarterlies. He does, however, urgently solicit subscriptions. The best praise is a three-dollar check for a year's subscription. The subscription list, like the editorial policy, is not strictly Aryan. The SEWANEE REVIEW has, however, had the honor of being banned in Nazi Germany. Its circulation in Japan is growing as well as in Soviet Russia. There is not a single subscription from Mr. Ataturk's Turkey but we are glad to report a new one from Louisiana.

ANDREW CARNEGIE was born in a weaver's cottage in Dunfermline, Scotland, on November 25, 1835. He was brought with his family to America in 1848. With Scottish industry, perseverance, frugality, and intelligence, he accumulated a great fortune.

In the *North American Review* for June and December, 1889 he contributed what has been called "the most famous magazine article of the nineteenth century": an article entitled "The Gospel of Wealth". For the benefit of wealthy men who must now face the necessity of "being soaked" by the Reverend Father Coughlins and Doctor Townsends or, morally motivated, move to a King Lear decision of distributing their wealth before it is decreased by Federal taxes already enacted (to say nothing of others possibly to be enacted), Andrew Carnegie's article should be re-printed. In his own lifetime, Andrew Carnegie distributed "for the improvement of mankind" three hundred and fifteen millions of dollars: the greatest particular donation was his gift to the Carnegie Corporation which he established as the legal trustee for the dispensation of his wealth. His philosophy of wealth has been epitomized by Burton J. Hendrick in these words: "Rich men, Carnegie said, had no moral right to their surplus accumulations. They were entitled to a competence, even a liberal one, but their wealth, in the main—the proportion being, in his case, as the sequel showed, ninety per cent—should be used for society. The temporary custodians were in reality 'trustees' for the public; their task was to see that these 'surpluses' were distributed in

ways that would best promote the welfare and happiness of the common man. The life of a business man was properly divided into two parts: the period of 'accumulation' and the period of 'distribution'. The rich man who died leaving vast surpluses that he might have disposed of in his own lifetime, for public good, 'died disgraced'."

Dr. F. P. Keppel, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, has announced the program of the Andrew Carnegie Centennial Celebration to be held in New York, Pittsburgh, Washington and other places throughout the country, on November 25, 26, and 27. The occasion might well be made the opportunity for newspapers and periodicals to re-open the whole question of the necessity for the distribution of wealth by those whose accumulations are in jeopardy through some legislative action inspired by compulsory politics. Democracy functions best through moral incentives: it is wiser and more expedient in the present crisis for rich men to act on their own initiative in a rational, calm spirit than for them to be the victims of State action. They might ponder and be inspired to imitation of Andrew Carnegie by the latter's own words: "This, then, is held to be the duty of the man of wealth: To set an example of modest, unostentatious living, shunning display or extravagance; to provide moderately for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him; and, after doing so, to consider all surplus revenues which come to him simply as trust funds which he is called upon to administer, and strictly bound as a matter of duty to administer in the manner which in his judgment, is best calculated to produce the most beneficial results for the community." Again, *absit omen!*

A commendable addition to important American literary quarterlies, the newly-founded *The Southern Review*, has a vitality, freshness, and pertinency of its own. In no ways does it imitate in physical appearance, in subject contents, or in viewpoint better-known quarterlies like *The Yale Review*, and the *Virginia Quarterly* which are solidly and deservedly entrenched in the esteem of those who perceive the benefits of the greater perspective and less ephemeral treatment of timely issues which the quarterly—as distinguished from the monthly—magazines can give. The danger of any literary quarterly lies in three directions—in veer-

ing towards the monthly periodicals for timeliness; or, if published in places remote from centers of changing emphasis, in becoming strictly regional organs; or, by assuming too greatly the function (not inconsiderable or unnecessary) of the so-called "little magazines", in becoming addicted to *preciosité*—to conduct guerilla warfares in strange regions for the purpose of altering sensibilities.

The Southern Review has admirably, in its first issue (July, 1935), established its worthiness and, though doubtless it must feel the vivid pressures of the region in which it is published, has escaped the contracting effects of an uncritical regionalism. The array of well-known writers who contributed to this first issue is not in itself something to awe: but when well-known writers contribute material worthy of their established reputation, the result is bound to impress. And this is the effect of *The Southern Review's* first number. (The sophomoric puerilities and platitudes of Mr. Aldous Huxley's "Literature and Examinations" is the only exception; however pertinent Mr. Huxley's comments on the teaching of literature may be applicable to the constantly, uniformly, and overexamined literary students in British provincial universities, one suspects that Mr. Huxley knows little or nothing about tendencies and experiments in the teaching of literature in the colleges and universities of the United States.)

In the 208 pages there are seven articles which range in scope through the basic cultural problem of America, techniques of the novel, Agrarianism, French political radicalism, the academic study of literature, the League of Nations, and aesthetics of the new poetry. The authors of these thoughtful essays are: Herbert Agar, Ford Madox Ford, Rupert B. Vance, Robert Kent Gooch, Aldous Huxley, Manley O. Hudson, and Cleanth Brooks, Jr. The writers of the four excellent short stories are: Katherine Anne Porter, John Peele Bishop, Edward Donahoe, and Jesse Stuart. Kenneth Burke contributes "An Essay on Recent Poetry", and Howard Baker "Some Notes on New Fiction." The shorter reviews leave much to be desired but John Donald Wade's "Prodigal: an Essay on Thomas Wolfe" is politely incisive.

WHAT are needed in the consolidation of tendencies and experiments in modern poetry are not impatient retorts to sincere confessions of bewilderment like John Sparrow's *Sense and Poetry* but analytical and comparative criticisms which result from sustained scrutiny of the kinds of poetry to which Sparrow and Max Eastman object. In the July issue of *The Southern Review* Cleanth Brooks, Jr., presents such an attempt in the first of three essays with the general title of "Three Revolutions in Poetry". In this first installment, "Metaphor and the Tradition", Mr. Brooks makes a noteworthy supplement to the aesthetics of the new "Metaphysical" poetry, the rationalization of which has for several years exercised the critical talents of Mr. Yvor Winters and Mr. Allen Tate.

Mr. Brooks clearly demonstrates that John Sparrow naïvely exhibited the currently obvious in matters of taste in his attack on radical modern poets: "His first indictment," says Mr. Brooks, "is their difficulty: his second, that they employ unpoetic subject-matter and words." Mr. Brooks disposes of the "difficulty" in understanding the poetry of T. S. Eliot, John Crowe Ransom, and Conrad Aiken by raising the question, involved in the second indictment, concerning the nature of "poetic subject-matter" and "poetic words". "Evidently", he says after brief illustrations of extracts from some difficult modern poets, "we are witnessing a reversion to an older type of metaphor. It is beside the point to condemn such figures which have been in force for the last two hundred and fifty odd years. What is important is that the canons themselves are being called into question,—in short, that we are witnessing a radical change in the whole conception of the function and fittingness of metaphor, and with it, a revolution in the conception of poetry." Something to the same effect was indicated in an article on *The Fugitives of Nashville*, published in the *SEWANEER REVIEW* in 1927. Mr. Brook's essay historically documents the idea and thereby reminds historically-informed but obtuse resisters of "unpoetic" metaphors in poetry are likely to forget, especially when they emphasize the radical novelties in some contemporary experiments.

The essay, however, is not an entirely historical exposition though it is most satisfactory when it is. A touch of ingenuity, reminiscent of Mr. Allen Tate in his more wilful and solipsistic

moods, mars Mr. Brooks's critical comments, although he is not apparently among those advocates of radical modern verse who "have come to accept the violence and abruptness of such figures [viz. some illustrative citations from Aiken, Tate, Ransom, and Eliot] as a matter of course", he unwisely defends his discrimination by an unfortunate comparison of a brief passage from Donne's "Valediction" with some lines from *Paradise Lost*, to the disparagement of the latter. His incentive is to demonstrate that Donne's metaphor is *functional* and that Milton's is decorative. "Take away Milton's similes", he solemnly pronounces, "and *Paradise Lost* (though shorn of much of its pictorial splendor) remains. Remove the conceits from "Valediction Forbidding Mourning" and the poem collapses. The conceit is the poem in a sense in which the Miltonic simile, with its emphasis on illustration and decoration, is not." Which is to say, in short, that similes illustrate and that metaphors (which are submerged similes) are functional. Conceive of *Paradise Lost* altered to a Donne technique and the result would be paradise lost. The logical completion of Mr. Brooks's assertion might very well be: "But no one has ever before assumed that similes constitute exclusively the poetry of *Paradise Lost*: they are, to be sure, illustration and perhaps decoration (though this is open to question) but illustration and doubtless decoration are aesthetically satisfying, if not indeed demanded, by the sustained scope, the emotional and imaginative stimuli, and the intention of the epic poet." The comparison of Milton with Donne is useful only in distinguishing between the *functional* character of Donne's conceits and the *paradigmatic* character of Milton's similes. To choose between them absolutely, without regard to the poetic effect intended by each, is like saying that a circle is more colorful than a triangle.

by Dr. Edward Quintard

BERRY PICKING

IF antiquity lends honor and dignity to a sport, how noble beyond most activities must be that of blackberry picking! The same sporting spirit, but of a milder flavor, is in your berry picker as stimulates your lover of rod and gun. Moreover, it is a pursuit enlivened by that hazard and chance which through all ages and times has urged on your fisherman and hunter, and with his bolder congeners, your berry-picker takes his risks and ventures, and as with them luck enters the lists against skill and wit. For the blackberry is to your berry-picker what the trout is to your angler, shy and illusive withal. A sharp eye, a skillful hand and a sure foot are necessary to spot your game to avoid scratch and tear, and not to lose your footing in those all-but-inaccessible places where the biggest berries are apt to tantalize you. For unless you are a mere dawdler at the game and content with meagre reward, you soon come to know that, like other prizes in this much bebrambled and thorny world, the best blackberries are not to be found without some slight toil and risk. The finest variety of your fruit, the long, large and luscious kind is a woodland growth, and has every chance to elude all but the most vigilant pursuant.

In drowsy late summer days an irresistible stimulus stirs through your born berry-picker, rousing him from his pre-autumnal dreams and bidding him be up and doing. To avoid or check this desire is to suppress one of the healthiest quickenings mortal flesh can feel, and to thwart one of nature's finest efforts to vitalize and strengthen man's physical and moral being. Fortunate for us if we still feel these gentle impulses stir within our blood. Happy the man whose body and soul have so escaped the deadening forces of modern artificial life that he must needs follow them.

Your genuine blackberry picker will choose his day with as much care and skill as a trout fisherman selects his. The auspicious

time is just after a rain, for it is then that the berries ripen and reach, as if by magic, an inexpressible perfection.

Given a day say in late August; it has rained during the night, and the host of clouds is still marshalled in the sky. An occasional shower veils the surrounding landscape, and trails of mist drag in soft, fleecy streamers over the hill tops, as you start, pail in hand. For several days past, during rambles and drives, you have watched with an eager and epicurean eye the rich clusters of darkening berries ripening along the roadside. You have made a mental note of places of promise. Involuntarily you recall certain bowls of delicious fruit, which together with generous slices of bread and golden pats of ice-cold butter, gave you a feast, the mere memory of which evokes a votary's prayer to ancient Pan! Visions of marvellous pies, whose flaky crust jealously conceals the rich purple juices beneath, rise to the mind's eye, certain jolly looking boiled puddings and rolypolys as well, which have sanctified past seasons and you hope are about to glorify the days immediately to come, enhance the happy vision.

By such Lucullian memories has your gustatory sense been whetted and your patience beguiled so that it might better endure the wait for the season's bounty.

As you trudge along what pleasures greet the eye on all sides! The brown thrasher, liveliest and busiest of birds, runs along the road enticing you to follow, only to lure you on and on and finally to elude you altogether, as with a sudden, impudent jerk of his tail he disappears in the nearby thicket. Overhead the martins and swallows are ranged in solemn conclave along the telegraph wire. You remember, how, in days gone by, to a young and ardent oologist, the eggs of these birds were a special prize. Their nests were found under the eaves of old barns, and in the cupola on top of the old farmhouse, the latter a place of special enchantment, being reached by a long wooden ladder, and having just space enough for one to walk about in when once inside. The hornets and wasps had made their nests in the corners, and the hot sun beat down upon it so fiercely that one could smell the odor of its pine boards. Also, it was forbidden ground, and this too lent immeasurably to its charms, and added to the exhilarating sense of freedom and independence which the young adventurer felt when, from its four latticed sides, he looked out over miles and

miles of rolling country beneath. High in the air a king-bird is chasing a hawk, a sight which always rouses one's sense of the dramatic—this aerial battle betwixt pigmy and giant. Not infrequently the unimposing counts in the long run; the microbe is more dangerous than the elephant, and it is the atom which defies the chemist.

The weather had been torrid; better for the berries than for berry-pickers. But the rain has laid the dust and cooled the air, which is redolent with the odor of fresh earth and leaf and meadow,—in fact, walking is prime. At each stride along the road you feel your pulse quicken and a gentle exhilarating glow courses through your entire system. You are getting free of your mental cobwebs. In shaking the dust from your feet, you are performing the same good office for your heart and soul, and letting into your gradually expanding nature some of the freshness and open air joyousness which surrounds you, and bathes you in an ethereal essence on all sides. Your fancy takes sudden flights as you gaze on the wide sky about you, across which slowly drift mighty hosts of vapor giants, huge, impalpable shapes whose voice is the thunder, and whose potential energies may at any moment be converted into lightning and deluge. A larger and warmer sympathy pervades your being as you listen to unseen woodland singers; and as the wind, that ancient minstrel, plays with subtle touch his souging chords and harmonies through bending hemlock and pine, you are unconsciously regaining your equilibrium and equanimity. Hereafter, for a time at least, your sensations and emotions will swing with a truer balance, you will think with a finer mind, see with a clearer eye, feel with a nobler heart.

You linger by the side of a little brook riotous with the revel of last night's rain. Its waters are swirled in eddies and whirlpools as it hurries impetuously along, tumbling over rocks and boulders, and coming dangerously near overflowing its banks. You again realize, as you have done so many times before, why poet and sage, statesman and prophet, musician and artist, have rhymed and philosophized, metaphorized and parabled, sung and painted, these lesser waters of nature, these rivers in miniature, whose infancy, big with great possibilities and future energies, they can well compare to human beginnings and growths and final absorptions in the infinite.

The growth along the roadside is every moment becoming wilder and more riotous. Tall clumps of spotted alder hedge the way on either side, forming an almost impenetrable thicket through which the sun glints and glimmers. Here are bushes of gnarled and twisted laurel whose glorious clusters of pink blossoms have long since turned to dust, but whose dark green and glossy leaves are beautiful Winter and Summer.

Under the rugged trunks of hemlock and pine they deepen their gloom and shade to an even darker mystery. Although this laurel of the new world never circled the head of a victorious Alexander or Caesar, it can boast a far greater conqueror for its votary, for each year it crowns the giant brow of the grim New England winter, whose mighty line of conquests began ages before the voice of man broke the silence of this ancient world. On alder and pine, broken fence and crumbling stone wall, grows the clematis, its delicate spray-like bloom and clinging tendrils lightening the green confusion. The yarrow, that ubiquitous and dusty-faced little tramp of summer highways and byways, asserts its right of association with its betters, the tall pink Joe-Pye weed and purple-spined vervain. Mingling with these and seen through the fenestrated spaces and vistas of vines and trees is the glory of field and meadow, the golden-rod, its bold plumes waving like banners. And on all sides, here wantoning in the shade and shadow, there revelling and basking in the sunshine, are the blackberries!

My gentle proselyte to berrypicking, has it ever been your palate's pleasure to taste a wild blackberry with the cool limpid dew still bathing its dusky sides? If not, prepare now to enjoy fulfillment of a blessed expectation! Yet cautiously withal, too rash a hand, too quick a step, may bring its own sad judgment in the loss of the choicest fruit, or even worse, in a sprained ankle.

The heat of the sun saps the lifeblood of the reckless berry which seeks the light. Here stands a bush seemingly void of fruit—but be not deceived, yet proceed with caution. The alertness required to escape the prick of thorn and scratch of bramble adds zest to the sport; nor are these natural protectors of the fruit its sole defenders, for the warrior wasps are ever ready to fight for their food, and wary indeed must be the intruders who would avoid a battle with these active and vigilant woodland sentinels.

Follow where the vine trails and loses itself in the dense cool foliage of that arbor of wild grape; gently separate the guardian leaves, and then for a moment let the eye be regaled by the feast which is so soon to entertain the palate. The plump, round drupelet of each berry is a tiny globule of rare and delicious juice, ready to yield its contents at the slightest pressure. No cellarer ever tapped a cask of so fine a vintage; no rarer nectar ever touched the eager tongue of Olympic God; no Tyrian purple ever stained with finer hue the hand of man; no urn of Araby ever spilled a more seductive fragrance on the desert air.

But the shadows are ever lengthening; a sudden silence steals over all things, and a chill creeps on apace from the surrounding hills. You turn your face towards home, and in the Walhalla of the sky see the Cloud Gods gathering for their twilight march. In majestic train they pass solemnly westward in robes of flaming purple and crimson, their crowns of burning gold flashing shafts of radiant light across the horizon. In the distance is heard the muffled rumble of their chariot wheels as they drive along their fiery way. In defiance they hurl a spear of fire against the pale planet of evening; the shaft strikes the zenith and shatters into a thousand glittering fragments whose light slowly dies out, quenched in the ocean of night, into whose mysterious depths all nature shall presently sink in forgetfulness and sleep.

by Arthur Link Newton

PHYSIOLOGY

Bound in chains together within this bony box,
Clasped in deadly contiguity,
Struggle ceaselessly the sapping forces of this mud.
They only sometimes see futility
In effort and call a truce.

by Henry S. Pritchett

COLLEGE IDEALS OF SPORTSMANSHIP

Not the victory, but the play,
May I, Lord, prefer alway.
—ANON.

TEAM sports for college boys are the distinctive heritage of the English-speaking peoples. Only in England, in the United States, and in the British commonwealths are games like cricket, baseball, and football rooted in the common life of youth. Even in Scotland cricket has never filled the place it does in England. In Canada baseball has displaced cricket on its merits,—as it seems to me from an experience with both games—though the English cricketers on the battle-front in 1917 were somewhat disgruntled to find the Canadians, in the short intervals of rest behind the lines, playing baseball instead of cricket!

But there is a fundamental difference between college team games in England and in the United States. In England football, for example, has remained a game directed by boys and played with a joy in the game. In our country it has become a show for pay and is managed by hired professionals. The joy of the game as well as the initiative is taken from the youth. He is a pawn in a closely organized enterprise. Before the depression came some large institutions had taken in nearly a million dollars in a single season in their intercollegiate athletic business. Some German universities (whose entire budget was less than this sum) have gazed with wonder and envy at this income earned by college boys.

It was not always so. There was a time when college games with us were played for the joy of the game by boys themselves. In the colleges of forty years ago, when baseball and football were growing up, the management of games and of matches between colleges lay entirely in the hands of students. In the little freshwater college that I knew it was not a question of inducing the boys to play, but rather how to deal with the number who were

keen to play for the love of it. In those far-off forgotten days there was no such thing as professional coaching. Occasionally one of the more favored youngsters had an opportunity to see a professional game and his observations were carefully treasured by his associates. Football was only beginning, and baseball had just evolved out of the old game of rounders. Masks for the face and other wonderful protections now worn by ball players had not been invented. The only protection the catcher had was a little rubber contrivance worn in the mouth in the hope that a foul tip would not knock out his teeth. Sometimes it worked. I was a catcher. When I left college I was offered a modest salary to play on an obscure semi-professional team. I have always believed, in the light of modern conditions, that had I accepted I might have come to some real station in life!

The chief characteristic of team-play in those primitive days was the joy in the sport, and the eagerness of boys themselves to play practice games quite as the Oxford or Cambridge boy does today. The definite organization of football and its development into a gruelling contest came long after baseball had become established as the favorite American college sport.

Why have team games as played in the public schools and colleges of England remained wholesome, vigorous, pleasure-giving games which make for an improved spirit of responsibility and of coöperation among boys; while our games have tended to develop into gruelling contests in which the player's pleasure in the game has disappeared, and the end to be attained is an exhibition which can draw large gate receipts?

The answers are perfectly well known to every college president and dean.

The *motif* lay in our inordinate desire to win. In no people in the world is this trait so pronounced as among Americans. In our college games this passion came to overshadow the reason for the existence of games.

The first step was to introduce paid professional coaches who gradually took over the management of sports and the training of boys. They were employed to win intercollegiate games. They responded most effectively to that call.

This regime costs money. Gate receipts were resorted to in order to raise funds. They paid beyond all expectations and the

performance became more and more planned for its appeal as a public show that could earn money. The game and the boys had passed out of view. It was a winning team that counted in the gate receipts. A huge stadium came to be the distinctive mark of a great university.

Soon it became the function of the coach not only to train the boys whom he found in the college, but also to "assemble" boys for his athletic teams, oftentimes by ways that are dark. In this process the enthusiastic alumnus has been an active factor. Often he sees nothing unsportsmanlike in assisting some boy who plays an unusual game of football to join the athletic squad of his own college.

And so it has come about in our colleges that the joy of team games has almost gone, the appeal to the initiative and leadership of the boys has gone with it, and extravagance bred of swollen gate receipts runs riot. A commercial cloud hangs over all. Worst of all, the urge for victory and the desire for gate receipts serve as an excuse for practices that weaken the moral fibre.

For this transformation the professional coach is only indirectly responsible. He was brought in for the purpose of "assembling" a good group of athletes and leading them to victory. If he failed in these respects he lost his job.

In twenty-five years the type of coach has risen in certain respects. Today he does not order the boys about with the explosive profanity which older coaches sometimes employed, but his regime is as arbitrary and as compelling as ever. The game is nothing; the victory is everything; and this pressure leads to devices for "assembling" a winning team. Even in the poorest colleges there is seldom a murmur at the expense of sending a secretary or an assistant coach five or six hundred miles to interview and possibly to "line up" a promising boy.

The correspondence of the Carnegie Foundation contains pathetic stories of the efforts of college authorities to stem this tide. A worried college president wrote, "The public demands football. Games could not be scheduled outside of membership in a conference. Once in a conference we were bound to its regulations. A contract had to be signed with each school and for each game that was to be played. We pledged ourselves that no boy would be allowed to play who was not enrolled in at least twelve hours

COLLEGE IDEALS OF SPORTSMANSHIP 401

of college work and who was required to do this work satisfactorily. Then we solemnly pledged ourselves to offer no inducement to any boy to come to our college to play ball. This contract was made to be violated. Usually two-thirds of the football players came to play the game and were in no sense college students. The public demanded a winning team. Only star performers could win games. There was only one way to get them—buy them in competition with other schools." Writes another president, "We really would have been glad to get rid of our whole football regime, but the fact is that when a college gets a football reputation it attracts to the college not only the football man, but even the man who wants to study, and merely by the fictitious prestige which attaches to it." How strange the situation becomes when an association of colleges has to exact a pledge to play fair!

There is one aspect of this matter seldom brought to the attention of the enthusiastic sportsman amongst college graduates. That is the pressure which a group of rich, enthusiastic, and well-meaning alumni of an old and popular university brings upon smaller institutions by an extravagant schedule of competitive sports. No man acquainted with American educational institutions can doubt that the demoralizing influence exercised by the extravagance of competitive sports in the larger endowed and tax-supported universities during the last quarter century has equalled, perhaps exceeded, the influence of these older and larger institutions upon the intellectual life of the colleges. The extravagance, the ruthless competition, the use of direct and indirect bribes did not start in little colleges in remote communities. These only copied in a small way what was being done in the old and populous institutions.

In passing it should be said that the influence of a winning football team on student attendance is negligible. Statistical studies have indicated time and again that winning football teams have no appreciable effect on college enrollment, save in a few exceptional cases where an unusual constituency, ambitious for athletic reputation, could be appealed to.

A coach under present conditions has an extraordinary part in shaping the ideals of those who come under his control. No professor has so intimate a contact with the boys as he. His notions of right and wrong, of fair dealing and of honorable play, are

those which students are almost sure to absorb. Of all places in a college that which needs most to be filled by a high-minded, scholarly gentleman is the place of the athletic coach!

The way to bring football and other competitive sports back to the status of a game rather than of a business, is to follow the example set by our English cousins in their public schools and in their colleges. That is to abolish the professional coach and gate receipts. If coaching is done at all, let it be done by some old "grad" who does it for love and not for money. Leave the management of athletics in the hands of the boys themselves with a sympathetic committee of the faculty as a consulting body, and once more the boy will come to have a joy in the game, a sense of his own initiative, and a high ideal of sportsmanship.

So far away have we come from our old ideal of college games that the average, well-meaning young American has forgotten what these sports were in our colleges in former days, and still are in the English colleges.

Professor Coffin, writing out of his own experience as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, has given an excellent description of the attitude of Oxford boys toward sports. I quote a few paragraphs which make admirable reading for the alumni of American colleges.

The Englishman does not come up to Oxford before the end of vacation to slave away at weeks of preliminary football practice. He is not herded into a gymnasium to eat and sleep between snatches of football outdoors, as the players of one of our great institutions of learning were actually herded last fall. He does not work out football problems on blackboards when the weather is, as it usually is in English Novembers, too inclement for comfort. He does not practice secretly behind locked gates. He has no paid spies watching Cambridge's progress. He comes back from his vacation to books and friends and sports—not to sports alone. After the lectures and dons of his forenoon and before the talks and cups and pipes of his evening he goes out and plays rugby. He works no apparatus, tackles no dummies. Instead he prepares for the Cambridge match, not by long week-days of drudgery and drill or by Saturdays of practice games with carefully selected weaker teams, but by playing the game hard with all sorts of teams, better than his and worse, dozens of teams, sometimes one every other day.

In the second place, there is no tyranny of alumni over the Oxonian sportsman. Somehow, old Oxonians do not think

COLLEGE IDEALS OF SPORTSMANSHIP 403

Oxford is going into a decline after a season of losses to Cambridge. At any rate, they do not, as the alumni of one of our best universities in the East do periodically, attempt to dictate sweeping changes in athletics. There being no coaches to blame they, of course, have none of these gentlemen to uproot, nor can they relieve their minds and their purses by scouring the country to get new dictators at fabulous figures. But they do not even bemoan their defeats in alumni magazines or hold mass-meetings or make reunion banquets feasts of Belshazzar with all sorts of handwriting on the wall. Better luck next time, that is their only comment. They would never dream of going to the preparatory schools with any kind of bait, pecuniary or otherwise, to recoup the destinies of their Alma Mater with ready-made athletic material. There are no great organizations of alumni in any case to spend their money or marrow or mind on athletics. Such things would spoil the sport. The old Oxonians have been such Cavaliers themselves, in the old days at Oxford, and gone so often care-free into stiff scrimmages, that their sense of values has remained golden; games to them are games, not battles, not dynastic wars between the reputations of great houses of learning, only sports between eager boys.

In a word, football in the English colleges and public schools is a gentleman's game with the conditions and ideals that go with a gentleman's life. Our football simply is not a gentleman's game. That is the plain truth. The American boy is regimented by a paid coach, written up in lurid columns in the daily papers, fed at a special table—all in order to be offered up at a show that will command the largest gate receipts!

The commercial organization of college sports has had its effect not only on the ideals of sportsmanship, but on college manners. The cheering of spectators has been regimented so as to afford an artificial participation in the game itself.

When a dozen young collegians parade in front of the grandstand with megaphones in their hands, cavorting like wild dervishes and calling on partisans to cheer, the ethics of the game and the spirit of fair play have been laid to rest. If there is any sign more repugnant to good sportsmanship than the frenzied action of these leaders and directors of cheering, it would be hard to imagine. Under this vulgar development the visiting team oftentimes has to contend not only with the home team, but with the organized participation of an artificially stimulated audience. A good, honest,

spontaneous cheer from an audience is a joy, but the cheer leader with his megaphone ought to be eliminated in the interest of sportsmanship and of decency. The booing in the Yale Bowl this spring in a game in which the visiting Cambridge (England) Rugby Team played, must have shocked the English participants.

The commercial call of present-day football games results in an inordinate expenditure of time and in an extravagant expenditure of money possible only through the huge sums realized from the public. Teams a thousand miles apart arrange for matches as if they were near neighbors. A team travels from the Atlantic to the Pacific with practice en route in Arizona. Ostensibly such games represent matches between two student groups. In reality they constitute trials of strength between rival trainers. The commission bookers offer quotations on bets and these are based in part on estimates of the prowess of the professional trainer. The notion that a team of young college players can be kept up to their studies on such junkets is groundless, no matter what form of tutoring is employed to keep the players up to an artificial system of marks. The whole hippodrome performance is unworthy of a university.

The reform of the existing situation is to be approached in no spirit of hostility to team sports. No man who, as a youth, has given himself with all his heart to one of these games will wish to see team games taken out of college life. On the other hand, every one who has to do with colleges knows that there are tendencies today in colleges games that are utterly demoralizing and that ought to be reformed for the sake of character and of manners. The responsibility to do this rests upon college officers and college teachers, not on groups of shouting alumni.

It is not inappropriate in this connection to answer a question that turns up now and again both in correspondence and in the press. Why, it is asked, should an agency like the Carnegie Foundation dealing with questions of higher education concern itself with college athletics?

The reason why the Carnegie Foundation has devoted time and study to intercollegiate athletics is that team games play a large part in the education of youth. They constitute an important factor in the formation of character and of the ideals of boys both in the high schools and in the colleges. In the United States, far more than in Canada, team games, and particularly football, have come

COLLEGE IDEALS OF SPORTSMANSHIP 405

to exercise a distinctly demoralizing influence upon college life. The time has come when American institutions of learning should deal with this question of competitive sports sincerely and courageously. It is not part of the service of an educational institution to lend itself to a commercial exploitation of college boys, which is precisely what is done today in American intercollegiate sports, and particularly in football.

by L. Robert Lind

CRITIC

What cross-grained pertinacity of mind
Hews at the nerve of vision? whence arose
The willful-warping spleen that cannot find
Peace save where blindness masqued in reason goes?
What scorn of passions not his own must change
Our words to dust and ash? what seething potion
Galls the proud heart? what mandrake-root so strange
Sends up this sickly bloom of self-devotion?

Yet no Prometheus groans in him, no pale
And Inquisition-tortured heretic
Enamoured of rebellion to prevail
Against the fire with helpless rhetoric?
This is the voice of one who knows full well
The spirit that denied rose out of Hell.

by Arthur E. Morgan

MORE THAN INTELLIGENCE

THE ideal of good development for a man or for a people is wholeness and good proportion. No single element of strength can bring a personality to full fruition. A man with a strong back but a weak mind, or with a powerful intellect but with primitive ethical control, is vulnerable and insecure, and may be a menace rather than an asset to his community. A man may even have many elements of strength, only to have them nullified by some crucial weakness. The value of a man's life generally is determined by his total capacity to survive and function and produce, and not by unsupported special traits. This is true of all phases of personality; physical, intellectual, and emotional. In our modern world special ability in some field is essential to well-proportioned personality, and special ability bordering on genius should be carefully nurtured and encouraged even though it is poorly supported by other qualities. Yet for specialization to be most successful it must be supported and made effective by all-round development. Apparent exceptions are numerous. Cæsar and Napoleon were said to be epileptics. Beethoven had great handicaps. Herbert Spencer was a weakly young man. All that such cases prove is that exceptional ability can surmount obstacles or even profit by them.

This need for proportion is as great in a nation as in a man. The Greeks, foremost in intelligence and in æsthetic insight, came to grief because of common human frailties. The Romans were great organizers and fighters, but lack of self-restraint and of refinement of purpose turned their power into tragedy. The anthropologists find vast remains of civilizations which rose to great heights through the quick power which comes by specialization, only to fall and perish because those strong points were not sustained by generally developed quality. The present precarious condition of American social and economic life is due to the fact that we have largely lacked good proportion in our development.

If our civilization should break, it would be because our giant structures are not supported and directed by a clearness of ethical understanding, a ruggedness of character, a social purpose, and an interest in the science of human relations, to match our interest in the natural sciences and in business organization.

During the nineteen twenties and during the previous century the whole sad story of human exploitation would have been largely avoided if each owner and administrator of business had seen himself as friend and neighbor and trustee for his employees and the public. He would then have lived on a modest income, paid good wages, maintained wholesome working conditions, and sold as cheaply as possible. Without excessive profits there would have been less tendency to overdevelop productive facilities. Because common men crave to respect and to follow sincere leadership, labor problems would have been at a minimum. The incomprehensible tangle of economic problems would have been largely solved by a simple change of human character and motive, and without any abstruse and complicated economic arrangements. Sidney Lanier saw this clearly when, fifty years ago, he wrote on the problem of trade in his great poem, "The Symphony".

Vainly might Plato's brain revolve it:
Plainly the heart of a child could solve it.

Now, few men originate their life outlooks by sheer creation. They acquire them by some form of education, which is just another name for the orderly and purposeful selection and transmission of human culture. The motives of men are the motives which heredity and environment have taught them to have. In no field can men wisely leave teaching solely to the casual and unplanned contacts of life, for such contacts nearly always transmit mediocrity and commonplaceness. Organized education exists for the purpose of supplementing the commonplace, casual education of everyday life with selected and organized experience, chosen by discriminating and experienced persons because of its excellence. The process of higher education is of course publicly supported, either by direct taxation or by that no less real though indirect taxation of the public called endowment and private contribution. No society committed to the purpose of serving the general good can justify the policy of taxing itself for the support of parasites, in which category the dilettante is included, but

should concern itself with the encouragement of social values. Social value I should define to include everything which adds to the range, the richness, and the quality of living; and I should include in dilettantism any freely chosen activity which is not motivated by hope of some increase and enlargement of living for society. Chess as mental recreation may be creative. Chess as the occupation of one's life would be dilettantism.

At an international congress of philosophy which I once attended I found a considerable number of dilettantes, men who accepted the support of the public as a natural right while they played a lifelong game of chess with words and ideas, almost wholly unconcerned with the cry of man for meaning for his life. Intellectual training in philosophy is not enough to arouse in men a passionate desire to help satisfy the craving for life purpose, and for an understanding of its significance. I would not shackle philosophy, but I hold that a true philosopher will have a craving to deal with what is somehow significant. To train for such a dilettante attitude toward a great calling requires only education of the intelligence. Should a dilettante become sensitive to the tragic cry for light on the pathway of life, his game would be spoiled. His insulation from reality protects him from such inconvenience. The relative sterility of philosophy is due largely to this satisfaction with intellectual sport alone, coupled with desire for secure income, and uninspired by burning and driving purpose—that is, by emotion.

No matter where one turns among the fields of human activity, the evil effects of unbalanced education are apparent. Consider the profession of the law. The lawyer is a man trained at public expense and set aside by society to furnish wisdom and guidance in human relationships. At its best the law is among the noblest of all professions. Its field is to study the arts and problems of society, to chart a steady course, and so to design, inspire, and guide human relations that increase of harmony and well being, and a finer organization of society, will result. But some of those who train men in the law schools have no such vision of the part the profession is to play. Often they train men to use intellectual shrewdness to win cases for their clients. All modern society suffers because this might-be great profession is the outcome of highly specialized intellectual training which has not become

keenly sensitive to its great responsibility for the weal or woe of human society.

The shortcomings of our American life, I believe, are less due to the intellectual limitations of our leaders, than to poorly educated motives, and to the fact that personal interests are confined chiefly to limited fields. I have talked to groups of medical men about their morbid fear of socialized medicine, and find that at bottom it generally is based on the fear of the more successful men that their incomes may be reduced. Medical education has too often satisfied itself with intellectual training in a specialized field.

II.

There is no phase of personality or character which will generally grow to great quality without the stimulus and guidance of a great tradition. Where such a tradition is dominant, even common men develop very fine traits. Where any phases of personality are left to grow by themselves without that help, even in naturally able men, they will generally be weak or rudimentary. Failure to recognize that fact has been a blight on higher education.

One of the most important of all truths regarding human behaviour is that conduct is controlled, not just by intellectual understanding, but by emotional realization of values. Even the sheerest intellectual conclusions have no influence whatever on conduct except as emotion gives them life and reality. Hence the most fundamental and important ethical issues will pass unnoticed by even highly educated men and women who have not developed emotional sensitiveness to those issues. Endowed scholars may comprehend the evils of human exploitation, yet if their living comes indirectly from that exploitation, their conduct may be determined by emotional craving for security and freedom to study, and not by sheer intellectual understanding of the exploitation which supports them.

Consider also the subject of eugenics. Our university men and women have inherited the best that the past has to give, in biological and in cultural inheritance. The groping of the race for civilization is summed up in them. The perpetuation of that inheritance thus requires that they have a strong sense of race responsibility, that they should weigh a good sized family and a

good home environment for their children as more important than social or professional preferment or the maintenance of easy living; and it requires that the institutions employing them should be friendly to this attitude. In the actual determination of social and national destinies few issues are so important as this. But the issue has been supremely important only in the past century, during the rapid increase of birth control, and university men and women who should be the first to be aware of it are generally failing in one of the most fundamental issues of modern life.

In no field of human concern can we safely assume that a feeling of value will emerge of itself without stimulus, guidance, and discipline. Fine human purpose does not grow itself. It requires the contagion of example and the guidance of intelligent leadership. The development of ethical discrimination and of vigorous, aggressive character is no exception to the rule that great personality comes almost entirely by contagious emotional transfer, by intellectual guidance, and by discipline and teaching. An intelligent code of ethics for everyday life does not come of itself. I have taken pains to explore the ethical codes and the driving life purposes of a considerable number of college and university professors. Quite generally the same vigor of interest and appetite for life which have led to positions of recognized scholarship have also resulted in interested ethical inquiry and in the forging of a working system of ethical principles and purposes. But very often in the general absence of well-equipped guidance and leadership there prevails vagueness, confusion, and conflict concerning the very rudiments of ethical purpose and commitment. Beyond uncritical acceptance of the current standards there is often an opportunist drifting, controlled somewhat by the momentum of childhood teaching, or by an unintelligent rebellion against that teaching. Some college and university teachers even believe that there can be no intelligent basis for life ethics, that their own ethical illiteracy is inevitable; and they are simply bored by the subject. So long as that attitude prevails in any field there is slight hope for intelligent progress.

Even to intelligent and highly educated men the most important issues will seem trivial and unimportant unless by education and emotional contagion these have come to seem important. If educational leadership has not given a feeling of value to great

ethical purposes, then people fall back on childhood training, or unconsciously absorb the casual and confused ethical controls supplied by the movies, current literature, and life about them; and this is true of educated men and women except where they have deliberately set about to achieve an ethical basis for living.

III.

A great education is one which clearly appraises all the elements which go to make up great living, and provides for the well-proportioned development of all these elements. By intellectual effort we may develop sustained power of thinking. But other kinds of activity are also important. The capacity to act with courage and decision, to withstand pressure of events to endure hardship, to meet the impact of powerful personalities, to be sensitive to ethical issues, and to purposes, hopes, and aims of other men—all these qualities are subject to education, and well-proportioned education will train and exercise them also. In almost every one of the largest cities of America are great universities with courses in government, yet in almost every city the actual government is in the hands of men who did not take those courses, but who learned to govern by taking part in events and by actual experience in human contacts. The universities have the theory, but the power goes to those who have developed skill, judgment, and emotional strength and stamina in practice. When the universities adapt their educational methods to the realities, we can have good government.

Among the many causes of the recent extreme breakdown in American business, in my opinion, is the fact that to an increasing degree business men have been recruited directly from the universities, and that until they were 23 or 24 years old they lacked the hardening and tempering and the growth of first hand judgment which are developed in young men of intelligence who come to grips with reality during the formative years.

A great education, I repeat, will appraise all the qualities which make up great living. This will mean revolution after revolution in our educational system. We shall find ways for our sons and daughters to decide, venture, endure, dare, withstand stress, select and choose issues and values, and to learn the cost of life by constructive effort, as well as to grow in intelligence.

Many men are born with ever-present sensitiveness to human needs and human values and the lot of the common man, along with vigor of personality. But in no one man are they so strong that they will reach great and well-proportioned development without the process of education. On very rare occasions some man may achieve that universality of education for himself. Most of us, however, if left to ourselves, become hopelessly provincial, with a thin veneer of the cosmopolitan. A well planned educational system could go far toward making universal men and women, each to the limit of innate capacity. It is possible for a contemplative person to become at home with administrative and executive functions, and his intellectual inclinations may add a quality of discrimination which the more typical executive often lacks. With the help of wise education it is possible for a provincial person to become a person of universal appetites and interests. Desire and expectation have much to do with human possibilities, and these can be aroused by great education. This universalizing of education will give more power of action to intellectual men, and more intelligence to men of action. Education should expect more of human personality than specialization. We have it in us to become all-around men and women, mature not only in intelligence, but in emotions, purposes, skill, courage, interests, and judgment.

In a great educational program there must be keen recognition of inherent traits and native constitution. To carry the demand for perfect proportion to such a point that it would put undue strains on strength of personality, or thwart the development of real genius, would be to make good proportion a fetish. Even in our demand for good proportion we must have a sense of good proportion which will save us from carrying that demand too far. Aristotle was inclined to repeat, "Those things which a man must learn before he can do them, he learns by doing them." The judgment we need in order to exercise this sense of good proportion can be developed only by exercising it as well as we can.

by L. Robert Lind

SHELLEY REAPPRAISED

IF we are to consider Shelley at all, it must be as the true poet's poet he has so often been called. To the general reader, Shelley, who never sought to be a mystery or an enigma to his fellow-men, is usually incomprehensible; and the layman's conception of this poet, though it has grown fuller with time and with the efforts of unprejudiced critics to deliver a fair estimate of him to succeeding generations, has been too much entangled with the harsh judgments of bourgeois morality to do the man justice. Thus, Matthew Arnold, the most representative critic of the age in English letters which succeeded to the realm of the Romantics, and himself a poet, has rendered perhaps the most inadequate criticism of Shelley, conceived in a very narrow understanding of his fellow-countryman and firmly, if blindly, based upon the Victorian standard of morals he criticized, yet could not wholly shake off.

Shelley has been understood best by other poets, if he has been understood at all, whether because of a greater sympathy arising from the fellowship of art or because of a greater generosity of mind, shown in a readiness to be swayed by his poetry and to be borne along upon its diaphanous wings toward an intuitive embrace of its aim and purpose. Whether it be Carducci or Francis Thompson, Menéndez y Pelayo or Browning, it is always a poet who has thrown the greatest light upon the motives of Shelley and upon his verse. None of Shelley's biographers has been able to say as much that is to the point in his large and careful volumes as a Francis Thompson could utter in the few glowing words of a short and by no means comprehensive essay.

Byron, absorbed in his own brilliance as the spoiled dandy of Romantic letters, could acknowledge, in one of his sincerer moments, that Shelley was "the greatest poet of us all"; Wordsworth could relax his Olympian and rather pig-headed indifference to the poets of his age long enough to recognize Shelley's surpassing

technique in a gruff sentence; and even Keats, in the famous and bad-mannered letter he wrote Shelley, advising him to "fill every rift of his subject with ore", was only giving the elder poet a back-handed compliment, which some regrettable obtuseness in him prevented him from presenting openly and graciously, as Shelley would have done had he been in Keats's place.

That Shelley, therefore, is a favorite with poets is undeniable; but it remains to be seen just what are the causes of this appeal. Poets, of course, have never been the exclusive admirers of Shelley; he belongs to the world and to anyone who can read his verse. It is not without significance that some of his soundest praises have been heard from abroad, and that the great voices of Italy and Spain, as well as France and Germany, have united with those of England and America in his honor. In the sketch that follows, then, the common reader may find an answer to his own question as to the causes for Shelley's fame among men—and he is as welcome here as any poet.

I.

To begin with the most predominant element in Shelley's work, we can say that his chief appeal is the *humanitarian* claim upon our affections. Though he sought industriously to found his poetry strictly upon an intellectual basis and to "fill every rift" with the ore of a systematic philosophy, he does not make his greatest appeal to the intellect but to the emotions in the same manner, as Walter Edwin Peck says, that "he *felt*, rather than reasoned his way toward the millenium". That generous and impulsive sympathy with mankind of which no critic can rob him, that constant effort to understand and to alleviate the miseries of his fellow-men, that purely *humanitarian* interest in humanity which, indeed, is often seen to better advantage in his prose works than in his poetry, must still and forever be his greatest message to us.

That he teaches us nothing has been the rather cursory judgment of some critics; but what greater lesson has anyone, even Christ himself, ever taught than love for our fellow-men? Not even Lucretius, weighed down with the chains of a philosophy as narrow as Shelley's own, ever surpassed the English poet in this pure aim, in the attempt, so closely akin to Shelley's, to free men from su-

perstition and to bring them the peace of knowledge and the power of understanding. How often does the sad Lucretian

Tantum religio potuit suadeo malodum

meet us in Shelley's work!

That his passionate love of nature is as deep as Wordsworth's and as closely allied to the love of human nature as the latter's, can be readily shown. How much in tune do these lines from *Alastor*

I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that my strain
May modulate with murmurs of the air,
And motions of the forests and the sea,
And voice of living beings and woven hymns
Of night and day, and the deep heart of man

ring with those lines from Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* lines

a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;

And how much these lines reveal of the gulf that lay between the two poets, in spite of their kinship in the pantheistic love of man and nature! (Wordsworth, when he wrote these lines, had not yet gone quite over to the orthodox Christian views of nature and man which crept into his writings, as time passed on, after the French Revolution). It is characteristic that Shelley should say "the deep heart of man"; that Wordsworth, following the bent toward arid intellectualism that ruined so much of his poetry, should say "mind of man". Indeed, of the two poets, Shelley seems often the more sincere lover of man and nature; for Wordsworth's love of nature and man is too frequently expressed in such hollow intellectualized sympathy, pumped up for the occasion, as in *The Leech Gatherer*. But of this, Salvador de Madariaga has spoken more fully in his essay "The Case of Wordsworth",¹ and I shall pass on.

It is true that Shelley did not always see as clearly as Wordsworth, and that he became deeply entangled in a metaphysical philosophy which he at last found too intractable to bring into the sphere of common things. The genuine poet, artist, thinker,

¹*Shelley and Calderon, and other Essays.*

like Goethe, Leonardo, and Aristotle, is at once far above humanity and yet solidly of it, at home aloft among ideals as well as among the realities of existence. That this flexibility of spirit is sometimes cramped, in lesser souls, by a philosophy too passionately pursued is lamentable, and it is the price a man pays for forgetting Nature in speculations about her. Insofar as such a philosophy, usually borrowed from others, interferes with the poet's clear outlook upon things human and things divine, to that extent he fails to maintain his status as a great poet—and we must say this of Shelley.

II.

Almost as important and universal an appeal in Shelley's poetry is the *humanistic*. Romanticism and classicism, whether or not they can designate anything more than a looseness of form opposed to a rigidity of form, an excess of emotion as opposed to a barrenness of sentiment, merge and become indissolubly one in Shelley's work. No English poet except Milton is more classical than Shelley; even Byron does not outdo him in the execution of the Romantic. It is one of the burdens that critics must bear to be compelled to use a terminological jargon handed down to them from their predecessors, and to press into the narrow confines of a single vague word all the force and passion of a whole century of writers, to be constrained to imprison in the carcer-house of Classicism a vast body of splendid literature quite as passionate and more profound, if somewhat more coldly expressed at times than the so-called Romantic. It is inevitable that any man who has read the Greek and Latin classics should delight in the echoes from these writers that he finds in Shelley, and that the pleasure any truly cultured person must take in reading Prometheus Unbound or Hellas should be far keener than that of one who has not known the city of "the violet crown" and her illustrious brood, in Greece and Italy.

With the clear vision of one who sees that all literature is one, that any literature can scarcely be understood without comparison with another literature, with impatience at the narrowness of a soul which cannot vibrate to any language but his own, Shelley understood that great sentence of Goethe—*Wer nur seine eigene Sprache kennt, kennt sie eben nicht*. To one who has trained

himself in more than one literature, Shelley is ever a friend, a companion upon a journey that leads to fairyland. It is of no little importance to notice, here, that Shelley, in his almost supernatural zeal and understanding for the foreign literature he made his own, naively offering in a letter to a friend to teach Keats likewise the Greek and Spanish tongues he loved so well, has given us some of the best translations extant in English.

Nor is Shelley's classicism as ornate as that of Milton, or as Johnsonian as that of the eighteenth century from whose withered lap he sprang. There are very few of the careful echoes we find in Pope and Cowper, Collins and Gray; all of his classical allusions, all of his most gorgeous pictures of the ancient world are transmuted by a fire of his own into something far more entrancing than the laborious attempts to bring the antique world into English literature that were forever being carried on about him. Even Byron has not so light a touch here as Shelley, for all the beauty and charm of his

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung.

There is more of the true classic restraint in Shelley's handling of the theme of antiquity; from the most extravagant flight of fancy he can calm himself into such authentic grandeur as that chorus from *Hellas*

The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,

itself an exquisite echo of Virgil. For Shelley, the ancient world is always sane and free from floridity; he knew well enough that

Greece and her foundations are
Built beneath the tide of war,
Based on the crystalline sea
Of thought and its eternity;
Her citizens, imperial spirits,
Rule the present from the past,
On all this world of men inherits
Their seal is set.

In the most rhetorical of his poems he recalls that Greece and her people were gifted with what has been termed a wealth of words and a disinclination toward rhetoric, an extremely supple language and a love of debate joined to a strict intellectual honesty.

Not all of his taste for Greek and Roman writers lay in the field of poetry; it was too catholic for that. From historian to orator, from philosopher to the obscurest chronicler, he read them all, and gave them tribute in some fashion, as in those last lines of *Alastor*, where he speaks of "a woe too deep for tears" which Thucydides likewise felt and set down in his history.

But the most remarkable feature of Shelley's classicism is its genuine humanism. It is not a selfish delight severed from all contact with other men; it is a real culture which recognizes the universal appeal and value of ancient literature for men. Thus, in his greatest flights into the spirit-world of the illustrious dead, he is thinking of the living man; modern Greece is honored no less than her ancient predecessor, as in the preface to *Hellas*. Shelley's classicism, at least as far as Greece is concerned, is instinct with sympathy for its modern descendants, however little in the eyes of some, that sympathy may be justified. Inextricably bound up with a deep appreciation of the greatest minds of classical antiquity is a passionate revolutionary ardor for the principles that underlie the struggles of modern men toward the political liberty and intellectual freedom which classic man of the great age of Greece enjoyed. Whether or not this ardor is firmly founded in scientific fact and profound knowledge of the conditions under which revolutionary Europe of the early nineteenth century gained its most enduring successes, means little here; the truth remains that Shelley's ardor for liberty was linked with a good understanding of what liberty meant to the Greek of the Athenian empire, and it rose far above the swiftly cooling ardors and sympathies of his compatriots, until it is the most significant thing we attach to his name today.

Of Shelley's romanticism it is almost needless to speak here except to say that it was as authentic an urge in him as classicism and that it fully bears out any possible implications of that vague and much-abused term. The wings of Shelley are his romance; his every image comes to him from a truly romantic imagination. Never before in the history of world-literature had poets made so much of pity and terror, man's primitive gaze upon the gigantic elements around him, of leaves and birds and water, wind, lightning and the music of the storm. Homer, of course, had done much with them; each Homeric simile calls to the mind some frag-

ment of modern romantic verse. But the modern poet brought into his treatment of nature something that neither Homer nor any Greek after him until the time of the romantic and deeply sentimental age of Hellenistic literature would have thought of bringing there—himself.

Shelley's poetry is full of himself, as the poetry of any great poet of modern times must somehow be. Not Shakespeare nor Goethe have succeeded in keeping themselves completely out of their works; they will creep in despite every care; Shakespeare into many a great passage of his plays and, in particular, his sonnets; Goethe into the more personal of his lyrics. Just so is Shelley's poetry, like the best of romantic poetry, full of his own hopes and fears, his sentiments, failings, aspirations. "I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire!"—and if he does so once, he does it twenty times throughout his works. It is the supreme Ego of the Romantic that speaks here; and, for good or bad, it is this very expression of self that is the glory of all romantic verse. For those who see only the brain in literature and never the pulsing heart, this is blasphemy; but for some of the most erudite of modern critics, it would be of tremendous advantage to learn that poetry is written with the heart as well as with the head, and that a certain deathless passion in the best of it is often its only reason for outlasting an age.

From the early novels and juvenilia to that last great hymn, *The Triumph of Life*, the romantic element is clearly evident in Shelley; but it is so bound up with classicism in his maturer work as to make one critic, Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, claim he is not a romantic writer at all, but purely classical, in the Greek style. This seems a mere quibbling over terms which cannot obscure the emphatic sympathy of Shelley for the romantic *Anschauung* of his time. In truth, he could not escape the influence which brought into being at once some of his most trivial pieces and portions of the finest art he ever displayed; for, as he said himself, "poets, even the best of them, are a very chameleon-like race; they take the colour not only of what they feed on but of the very leaves under which they pass."

We do not think it strange, therefore, but a prompting from the profoundest depths of his being, that into his poetry he seems almost to thrust those wonderful images of cloud and bird, wings,

and all delicate things of nature; it is not for nothing that he has been called "the poet-laureate of water vapor". For, as he has justly been termed "in poetical gifts, second to none since Milton and Shakespeare", quite as justly can he be named as one of the greatest lovers of nature in English verse.

This fusion of the classic and the romantic in Shelley is not so incongruous in a time when, as Santayana says, "Greece was a remote fascinating vision, the most romantic thing in the history of mankind." It is true that "the second love of Faust is for Classicism"; and of Shelley, who bore in him the seeds of both Faust and Prometheus, this is doubly so. His Prometheus Unbound shows this intermingling of supposedly discrete elements to satisfaction; his Prometheus, "eyeless in hate" as Samson Agonistes is "eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves", is classical in his proud endurance, with "aught evil wish" dead within him; but the Phantasmus, Spirits, Echoes and other sprites who wheel about his head are the wild creations of a romantic imagination akin to that which brought forth Puck himself.

III.

It is to this latter element of witchery, of what the French call *le féérique*, that these last remarks have brought me. This is a side of Shelley not always brought into relief in writings about him, nor as adequately analysed as it deserves to be—the element of the fairy-tale in his poetry. No one, except that character in Norman Douglas's *South Wind* who "could listen to them for hours. There is something eternal about them", loved fairy-tales more than Shelley; and they passed almost imperceptibly into his poetry.

From Queen Mab, that formless creation of adolescent fancy, embracing the whole universe, to his Witch of Atlas, straight out of Grimm or Anderson but lacking the firmness of outline which the latter writers could give to their creatures, the fairy, offspring of fine-spun imaginings, peeps forth at us in laughter. The Phantasms of Prometheus Unbound are parts of Shelley's nursery apocrypha; and what are the Desires and Adorations, the Splendours, Glooms and twilight Phantasies of Adonais but intellectualized fairies, lacking the verve of the Arabian Nights but endowed with

all the somber grace of Perrault? What is the "isle under Ionian Skies" of Epipsychidion but some magic region fashioned of the mind, akin to the Hesperides or the Blessed Isles, some Avalon whither this latter-day Arthur may repair, his battling with the hosts over and done at last?

M. Edmond Jaloux has devoted some interesting remarks to the *Psychologie du Féérique* in literature. He describes the immense impulse given to the development of man's intellect by the swiftly increasing control over his environment, its strong contrast with the long centuries of man's primitive childhood, from which still come vague disturbances of the heightened consciousness, in the mystic state, in dreams, delirium, neuroses, and in poetic inspiration. Man's instinct toward fairy-tales has been for him a counterpoise, a sort of protective mechanism against the malignant forces of circumambient nature. The very etymology of the word "fairy" (*Fata*, destiny) is a proof of its psychological association with the confused hopes and fears of man. Wherever evil, suffering, death, have menaced him, he has escaped into Walhallas and Elysian Fields; and his fairy-tales have arisen as a force interceding against his terror. From this point of view, we see, with more appreciative eyes, Shelley, as a child, hacking away at weeds with a wooden sword as if they were dragons and he Saint George, or playing with toy boats, argosies to the Indies.

Terror and wonder, these predominant features of fairy-literature, are plentifully revealed in his works. There is a beauty in fear, a strange fascination for him in the "the tempestuous loveliness of terror" he speaks of in the poem On the Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci in the Florentine Gallery. There is always a serpent in his Eden, and he is in love with its gleaming eye. The ghastly has a firm grip upon him, the blood-curdling products of his imagination send the hair up behind his ears with delicious fright, like a small boy peeping into the dark hallway of a castle, with that almost real conjuration of the awful which Henry James has so inimitably given us in "The Turn of the Screw".

However, what is merely gruesome, as those lines in Ginevra, where he seems to roll the frightful over his tongue,

Returned like ravens from a corpse whereon
A vulture has just feasted to the bone

or one of those startling fragments, like this cancelled passage from *The Sensitive Plant*,

Their moss rotted off them, flake by flake,
Till the thick stalk stuck like a murderer's stake,
Where rags of loose flesh yet tremble on high,
Infecting the winds that wander by

he more usually transfers from its hideous isolation into a more authentic beauty, to form part with a more harmonious whole, as in the *Cenci*. Yet there is much of this terrifying ore he failed to transmute with his flame; and it remains clearly distinguished in its lack of artistry from the whole poem, like his favorite serpent set apart from the singing bird he holds in fascination, like a basilisk which can never become one with the creatures she has turned to stone.

This important element of the *féérique* often appears in descriptions of nature, wild, somber, full of that "certain ideal melancholy" which, as he tells us in the Advertisement to *Rosalind and Helen*, is "favourable to the reception of more important emotions". The early novels, *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvyne*, or *The Rosicrucian* are full of this; the first paragraph of *St. Irvyne* is a capital example of this *Mysteries-of-Udolpho* type of writing in which he took such evident delight. Indeed, in a later age, shorn of his burdensome philosophy and gifted with more ability at making plots and drawing characters, Shelley might have been a first-rate writer of detective stories, or a fashioner of beautifully-written horror tales like Arthur Machen.

His interest in the Devil is a part of this tendency toward *le féérique*, and his affection for Goethe's *Faust* is due to more than mere admiration of a great German poem; in fact, Shelley himself appears to us as another Faust mingled with the weaker elements of a pure Dostoevskian Alyosha. He is generally on the side of the angels, with the meeker souls who are to inherit the earth; for all his admiration of them, he possessed few of the stronger characteristics of that spirit he must have envied, Mephistopheles, and that other forceful soul whom he never knew, Ivan Karamazov.

If anything in the human mind is akin to the mythopoetic tendency of man, it is metaphysics; I see no more convenient or logical way of treating this strange philosophical malady than to refer it to the same human instinct for fairy-stories of which I have just

been speaking. The metaphysical aspect of Shelley's work bulks large; but one need not regard it as more of a fault in him than his naive preference for the fairy-tale. Here again the modern psychologist, with his escape-mechanism and complexes, all useful tools of his trade, might do yeoman service in analyzing and tracing to their true source in the more primitive recesses of man's consciousness not only the pantheism of Shelley and Spinoza, but the idealistic systems of Kant and Hegel. Shelley was never more than an amateur at philosophy, but he was a retiring soul; how many great philosophers have likewise been retiring souls, Spinoza at Amsterdam, Kant at Koenigsberg! May it not be true of philosophers, as it is of writers of fairy-tales, that their colossal world-systems, their fine-spun fabrics of the mind, are only a more subtle mechanism of protection against the overwhelming forces of nature, and that in explaining the universe they defend themselves against it, as primitive man was wont to do by giving a secret name to the elements he feared? This is, at least a view that would bear investigation.

Together with his metaphysics, one must consider Shelley's ethics. In this regard he approaches that great man whom he admired so much, Spinoza; and to Shelley might as fitly be given the appellation Novalis gave to the Jewish philosopher, "*ein Gott-betrunkener Mensch*". Both were in deep sympathy with the lot of man; and both were persecuted.

The pantheism of Shelley was of the same loose all-encompassing variety as Spinoza's; the Spinozistic influence upon Goethe's *Faust* was by no means the least of that poem's attractions for him since he saw in it, as in the *Ethics* of his master in philosophy, the same large conception of humankind, in all its strength and weakness, which he held himself, although his was in a more confused state. Hume and Locke did much to accentuate the materialism of Shelley; one of them gave him at least the strongest of the three arguments in his brief Oxford tract, *The Necessity of Atheism*. But Spinoza left the most lasting impression, though Shelley did not have the systematic mind to formulate and give the world such an enduring world-outlook as is expressed in the *Ethics* of Spinoza. Weak as flesh, his strength was also of the flesh; and with all the folly of a man who seeks to reduce all the problems of life to the dictates of pure reason, he evolved those principles

which were to govern his life. That his conclusions in ethics proved false and weak in practice was not the fault of his premises, gathered from Plato and Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Condorcet, and the redoubtable Godwin. The fault lay in the interpretation Shelley placed upon these cardinal tenets, distorting them into something that seems too often mere selfishness and absurdity. His treatment of Harriet, the darkest blot upon his character, in spite of all that writers like Mr. Dowden can do to mitigate its intensity, arose out of his self-imposed, self-evolved system of ethics. As Mrs. Shelley wrote in that note to Alastor which, with her other notes, has formed the idealized picture of Shelley that Arnold preferred to any other, "in all that he did, he at the time of doing it believed himself justified to his own conscience".

IV.

What now shall be said of Shelley's art? For that is also one of the appeals he makes to us. As a craftsman, Shelley is not easily to be outdone by his contemporaries; and he far surpasses Wordsworth in artistry. Of course, there is a good deal of rhetoric in his poetry, a rich mouthing of words for their own sake, something familiar enough in Shakespeare; but it is a glorious rhetoric and almost always faultlessly modulated in its metrical and rhythmical qualities; it is very hard to think of that last organ-note of Adonais, the last stanza, as only empty rhetoric, to take G. R. Elliott's view of it.²

It is in the lyric that Shelley's art is shown to best advantage; in that burning flash of song that seems to burst from his heart into the light of day, he is supreme. "Swiftly walk over the western wave, Spirit of night"—it is a slow tune; and it is gratifying to know that so many of Shelley's lyrics, like those of Shakespeare, have been set to music. There is no one so musical in his best moments; and no one more human, except Burns, with that humanity, weak and struggling, yet pitifully brave, which speaks to us from most of these short poems. There is joy here, the joy of the mounting skylark, as in the song "The Golden Gates of Sleep unbar"; sadness too as in "O World! O Life! O Time, On whose last steps I climb". The charm of common things is also here; the

²*The Cycle of Modern Poetry*, 1929.

third stanza of *The Boat on the Serchio* is packed full of familiar objects, even to those glow worms which

went out on the river's brim
Like lamps which a student forgets to trim:

there is the conversational tone of the personal letter, as in the poem *To Edward Williams* (in which stanza VI curiously recalls Bryant's *To a Water Fowl*), and always music, music. He has a habit of giving a dying fall to the second lines of many lyrics which endows them with incalculable harmony.

Even Shelley's fragments have, like Sappho's, a character all their own, an immensity in little, vocal for a brief moment and then silent again. There is all the pathos, all the poignant unfulfillment of a life in these broken pieces; what, for instance, is more evocative of beauty than this strange *Fragment to the Moon*—

Art thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever changing with a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

where he has used that favorite word "companionless" to such effect?

V.

As a narrative poet, he is almost a complete failure. The delightful skill we have observed in shadowing forth all the scenery, all the characters of a fairy-pageant, is sadly lacking when it comes to telling the story itself which these weird characters and settings fairly demand. To save his life, Shelley cannot tell a story; it is only a somber and noble tableau he sets before us in most of his long poems. *The Revolt of Islam* is the most languid revolution that ever arose from the cerebrations of a mind bent on virtue; *The Mask of Anarchy* is only propaganda of an elevated sort, and we are reduced to the doubtful outline of the travesty *Peter Bell the Third* for a story from Shelley's hand. Only in the *Cenci* does he give us action, generated from a plot; and there it is breathlessly swift.

Shelley's genius was too introspective, too speculative, too theoretical and contemplative (which are one and the same) to be much in tune with action; that he did not prefer the company of

men of action, as Byron did, is quite evident by his lukewarm toleration of Trelawney, whose gusty strength and breezy personality he did not admire as much as is supposed; a letter in which he suggested that he preferred sole ownership of the "Ariel" (letter to Mr. Gisborne, June 18, 1822), as a writer to the *London Times* points out,³ in order to get rid of Trelawney as a joint-owner, seems to prove this.

We have here, therefore, a strange paradox in this poet who loved the wind, the swiftest elements, all moving and flying things, but who could not make a story of them—only a picture, a still-life. The *Revolt of Islam* is deadening in its slowness of movement; there are too many halts to deliver eloquent apostrophes, as the one to the American people in Canto XI. The poem like Keats's *Endymion* (written about the same time) is too intent on the beautiful phrase or word, the rare and sensuous aspects of nature, upon the very inconsequences of narration to be narration. Laon is only Shelley himself, enjoying the good offices of that Dr. Lind of the Eton days, and bursting forth at intervals into passionate addresses, not to the Irish people, but to the inhabitants of another of his dream-cities; we must conclude that the poem is only the "succession of pictures" he called it, and not a narrative poem, as he believed it was.

VI.

Scarcely any other poem he wrote shows even as much action as *The Revolt of Islam*. The lyrical dramas, *Hellas* and *Prometheus Unbound*, are only gorgeous pageants, extravagant medleys of Shelley's romantic and classic urges, given partial form in *Prometheus*, by a study of the problem of evil. Neither *Rosalind and Helen* nor *Julian and Maddalo*, personal in motive as they are and therefore more likely to betray movement if only of a domestic sort, shows any well-thought-out action. Only the *Cenci* possesses the swiftness of life, the touch of reality so lacking in

³Mr. Massingham, author of "A Friend of Shelley", refutes the contention of the writer mentioned above (Mr. R. E. D. Sketchley) on the grounds that this letter expresses only "a gesture of casual impatience". Other testimony to the contrary notwithstanding, I think we can safely accept Mr. Sketchley's views, which are likewise not without support from other critics. See *London Times Literary Supplement*, July 24, 1930.

Shelley's greatest poems; and to the Cenci we turn for a consideration of his dramatic powers.

No work of Shelley shows so unmistakably the influence of Shakespeare; the hand that wrote *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* has left its eternal sign upon "the greatest blank verse drama since Shakespeare," as Swinburne called it, with characteristic enthusiasm. That it was the only one of Shelley's poems to go into a second edition during his lifetime is not indicative merely of its popularity; it contained at last, in spite of its unpleasant theme of incest, already foreshadowed in less violent form in the first draft of *Laon and Cyntha*, those elements which the public has always demanded in a work of literature that is to meet its favor—action, reality, well-drawn characters, and skillful craftsmanship, bound together by an inevitability of progress to a stirring finale, and all maintained at a high level throughout.

The resolute and truly feminine character of Beatrice is clear to us at all times, contrasted strongly with the cunning lust and mad cruelty of Cenci; the mother, Lucretia, weak, trusting, broken by her husband's calculated malignity, yet hoping to avoid the terrible deed her daughter at last is driven to commit; Giacomo and Orsino, lending mutually to a certain gloomy atmosphere like that of *Hamlet*, as in the speech to Giacomo, Act III, Scene 2, where Orsino says, recalling at least in one line the famous soliloquy of the wild Dane—

Once gone
You cannot now recall your sister's peace;
Your own extinguished years of youth and hope;
Nor your wife's bitter words; nor all the taunts
Which, from the prosperous, weak misfortune takes;

all the characters contribute to a well-conceived and well-executed drama.

The play moves with great speed, as every tragedy should move, maintaining the proper points of heightened interest and bringing to its fitting reward each fateful deed of its characters—that of Cenci, to a death of violence, in the night, with daggers; that of Beatrice, to a noble end as an entirely justified murderess, who cannot, however, escape the stern punishment of a parricide. All the wild splendour and lust of the Renaissance glow again in this

drama; its wickedness is of the Borgias; its horrors straight from the prisons of the Doge.

It shows quite accurately how well Shelley understood the Latin mind and how much in accord with it was his own. In his understanding of the Catholic religion as it affects the Italian soul he shows an acuteness of perception in matters of race and belief not often given to the Anglo-Saxon; his own intellect, utterly opposed to the Christian dogma of a personal god, can appreciate that warm worship of the Virgin and the Saints which has so large a place in the Southern heart, and which strikes the matter-of-fact Northern mind as so much idol worship. With a temperament profoundly religious as Shelley's, this appreciation on his part is not so strange, and we regard him with less astonishment when we learn that he sat down and read Dante, one sunny day, behind the altar in the cathedral at Milan, while all the outside world was at its best and dearest, and the sky of Italy very blue.

Nowhere does Shelley approach the dramatic excellence of the *Cenci*; Charles the First, his only other blank verse drama, does not allow us to judge it accurately, because of its unfinished condition; nor is there much in it, except for a few splendid lines toward the end, spoken by Hampden, which could lead us to suppose that it would have been more than passingly good, had Shelley completed it. It is only another fragment.

VII.

This hasty sketch of Shelley's attainments as a lyric, narrative and dramatic poet has quite left out in its course the greatest of his poems, upon which his fame rests most solidly—*Prometheus Unbound* and *Adonais*, first of all, with *Hellas* and the *Ode to the West Wind* close seconds. So much has been written in their praise that they need no further words here. *Epipsychidion* (to which, significantly enough, the very human Mrs. Shelley appends none of her voluminous and not too revealing notes), though it contains some of Shelley's most characteristic lines, we can only regret as a delineation of Shelley's chief weaknesses. Other poems are to be glanced at later; and here, in particular, we shall touch upon such poems as *Peter Bell the Third*, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, and other political satires, in connection with a quality in Shelley which has

never, to my knowledge, been even vaguely adumbrated, while it has been at least once flatly denied—his humour.

Matthew Arnold went a good deal too far when he cavalierly disposed of this important feature in mentioning of Shelley "his utter deficiency in humour". Arnold's entire treatment of Shelley causes us to wonder whether the critic himself did not quite lack, for the moment, this saving grace. His intentness upon Shelley's moral turpitude, his entire neglect of his poetry, his sentimentally Victorian desire to preserve untouched the pure and ideal Shelley which the latter's blue-stocking wife had given to the world in her edition of his poems, bespeak a blindness toward many things in Shelley, beyond the failure to face squarely the problem of Shelley's importance and rank in English literature.

But where Arnold failed some one else may succeed, provided he regards Shelley not as at worst a cad and, at best, "a beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain." There is a middle path where Shelley shines in his true light, as one of the bravest and kindest poets that ever adorned the world of English verse; there is a sensible point of view which reveals him as far from the ineffective visionary he has been held to be; there is finally a straight-forward impartiality of judgment which brings to the vision, obfuscated by such a squeamish criticism as Arnold's, a different Shelley, a real man as well as a real poet.

It is as unreasonable to conclude that a man as universal in his tastes, and all-embracing in his sympathies and enthusiasms as Shelley had no humour as it is to insist that he saw all human relationships through the distorting spectacles of Platonic love; his children, I trust, will prove the fallacy of the latter, while I shall endeavor to point out the injustice of the former, contention.

Milton, his only logical predecessor, to whom he owed so much, shows little humour, it is true, in his poetry, though the poems *On the University Carrier*, and *L'Allegro* show a quaint jollity, while a perusal of the manifold pages of the prose works would yield, no doubt, a more or less rich harvest of humour to the perceptive eye. With Milton as with Shelley, the work is so much the man, the two are so inextricably one, that our task might seem at first glance quite hopeless. But in Shelley's case, we find more than sufficient

evidence in his poetry alone to confute with ease an assertion even so temerarious and dogmatic as Arnold's.

It is only a further indication of ampleness of spirit in Shelley that he could see the comic side of things as well as the tragic. The picture of him which Mrs. Shelley gives us, reading the *Ode to Liberty* at the Baths of San Giuliano while the pigs for sale at the fair outside the windows grunted their approval, is for once not at all the earnest young reformer we know, but a man alive to the humour of the situation and clever enough to turn it to account in as rollicking a piece of witty writing as *Swellfoot the Tyrant*. There is a skillful conversion to profit of each bit of political folly and blindness in the England of that hour which could only be the work of a man with a deep vein of humour in him. As a poem, as a political satire, it is not a great piece; but it is full of humour to any one who cares to read it even now, severed by so many years from the contemporary figures and events which it set out to ridicule.

Shelley's bitterness against tyranny and obstinate stupidity in high places, it must be admitted, cannot quite be tempered in this poem by mercy; he gave no quarter to the dull and stupid, to the oppressor and to the political scoundrel. But an almost Rabelaisian humour flashes through the bitterness and gives us brief glimpses of hitherto uncharted regions in his personality.

As a burlesque of classical Greek tragedy, it is not outdone by such a piece of academic fooling as A. E. Housman's famous skit; and it strengthens my earlier remarks on Shelley's feeling for the classical, in-so-far as a parody can successfully show one's understanding of the matter to be parodied. It puts us also in mind of another poet who has been characterized, broadly but accurately, as a mingling of Rabelais and Shelley—Aristophanes. There is much vigorous, if fanciful, action here; the real people whose caricatures are swine and court-officials and Oedipus and Iona are portrayed with details which make them unmistakable; the climax, in which the Ionian Minotaur reveals himself as no other than John Bull, is a fitting close to the burlesque.

But it is in *Peter Bell the Third* that Shelley's most genuine humour makes its appearance, together with the closely allied criticism of human nature and its defects which is usually the concomitant of humour, or, more often, its very reason for being.

Here he gives us those acute analyses of Wordsworth and Coleridge which we find so hard to reconcile with that reputation for not understanding human nature that Mary Shelley was so largely instrumental in forcing upon the world of critical letters. It is no longer the morbid visionary who speaks in accents so well-attuned to their subject; it is a man of the world, calmly judging his fellows and putting his judgments into humorous verse, carelessly tossed off after a long period of weighing and counter-weighting of defect and virtue.

No one perceived so fully the prudish side of Wordsworth and brought it into relief in such verses as these:

But from the first 'twas Peter's drift
To be a kind of moral eunich,
He touched the hem of Nature's shift,
Felt faint—and never dared uplift
The closest, all-concealing tunic.

That "low-tide in soul", too often evident in Wordsworth, is here the target of a fine satiric pen employed upon a subject worthy of its sharpness—the cold dullness of the fearful conservative, cautious of his own virtue, and carefully skirting the pitfalls of passion. The true enthusiasm for life which animated Shelley is delineated by inference throughout this portion of the poem.

For Coleridge, too, Shelley seems to have eyes which do not burn with wild humanitarian ardor, but with sympathy and pity and full understanding. There is a fatherly side to Shelley's character, often shown in kindness to friends and in concern for their welfare, which appears in his few words on Coleridge in *Peter Bell the Third*. It is a humour born of compassion, a wit sprung from pity itself that we read in these scant lines, as well as in the *Letter to Maria Gisborne*, where an equally noble impression of Coleridge is given to the reader.

If a sense of humour is indispensable to the well-rounded man, we cannot call Shelley one-sided. We cannot lose sight of this trait, for all of Shelley's passionate earnestness, and his often apparent oblivion to the humour of the situation. If his philosophy and self-made ethics made him insist too much upon their logical conclusions, as when he invited Harriet to live abroad with him and Mary, it was because ideas, endowed with all the fire of passion, were stronger than his humour and common sense in this instance. This curious opposition of emotional thinking and practical com-

mon sense is characteristic of the Shelley we have now to consider—Shelley, the man.

VIII.

If we are to admit the postulates of such a fascinating study in ethno-psychology as Salvador de Madariaga's recent *Englishmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards*, that is, that the chief determining characteristic of the English people is action, of the French, thought, and of the Spanish, passion, then Shelley appears more strongly than ever to us what he has appeared to any sensible observer for over a century—as a peculiarly un-English personality, a man of passion and not of action, as, in fact, more Spanish than English. Bernard Shaw has said, with his customary decisiveness, "the English do not deserve to have men of genius"; but we must excuse the English in the case of Shelley and their failure to appreciate him in his own day—he was so unlike the English themselves. An anomaly is looked at askance in England; and Shelley was one of the most anomalous creatures ever born on English soil. He was and is, representative of nothing which is dearest to the English heart: common sense, the tendency to strenuous action and empirical thought, together with a strict moral sense, a strong feeling of coöperation, fair-play in sports and politics. He was individualistic in action and metaphysical in thought; therefore, a rebel against established institutions. He disliked strenuous sports and was prone to reveal his passions more plainly than is the custom of the Englishman; therefore, he was a cad and a visionary sensualist. The insistence on outward purity of morals (though a purer man than Shelley never lived) has dogged English criticism to this day; it is a prominent trait in the English character, and it is extremely revealing to note how, from Arnold's time to this, criticism of Shelley has revolved about the one point—the morals of the man. Even on this common ground critics have found cause for disagreement and point-blank contradiction which leave the amateur reader of Shelley as much in the dark as ever in regard to an acceptable critical judgment of the poet.

It will suffice here to present the views of Shelley held by two equally reputable critics, one in America, the other in England, as fairly representative of Shelley-criticism in the twentieth century. Let us take Mr. P. E. More first. Mr. More begins by calling

Shelley "a peculiarly feminine genius", which, I suppose, we are to take as a reproach since his essay is, on the whole, unfavorable to Shelley, as it was fated to be from the start; but we need not take this remark too seriously, in view of Goethe's "*ewig Weibliche*" and its tremendous influence on men of literature. His main attack is directed against the "Shelleyans", who are uniformly enthusiastic and contradictory in their admiration of Shelley, contradictory because they admit the defects and contradictions in Shelley. Now this latter argument is no argument at all; it only strengthens the position of the so-called Shelleyans to maintain common-sense in their view of Shelley and admit that there is clay as well as ambrosia in their hero. Mr. More then claims Shelley made no progress in mastering the technique of verse, and points out his inability to mold his poetry to Italian rhythms, with their pauses, in his Ode to the West Wind. The critic's chief objection to Shelley, after all, is delivered in the extremely vague assertion that Shelley is "essentially false", and he ends his essay⁴ with the scarcely apposite and certainly logically untenable view that "There is nothing mutually exclusive in the complete enjoyment of both Milton and Crabbe; it is at least questionable whether the same man can heartily admire both Milton and Shelley", based on the false assumption that one cannot enjoy Lycidas and Adonais equally well.

Let us now turn to Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Here is none of More's condemnation of Shelley's "unreasoned emotion" and lack of "the inner check". There is only praise; "ineffectual is not the word" for Shelley. "His influence on our *poets* is from the first incomparably greater than Wordsworth's or Byron's". Francis Thompson, who is rapped so hard by More, is, to Quiller-Couch, "the clearest-eyed" of Shelley's critics. Even Shelley's skill as a technician is defended; he grew in technique all his life, as a comparison of the terza rima used in the Ode to the West Wind and that of The Triumph of Life will show.

It is true that Quiller-Couch's essay⁵ is a lecture to school-boys while More's is a book-review addressed to a mature and sophisticated public. But in their essential points they reveal what a dilemma the name of Shelley presents to criticism even

⁴*Shelburne Essays*, Seventh Series, 1910.

⁵*Studies in Literature*.

to-day, after his reputation has been white-washed by a host of admirers, some of whom have done him more harm than good, and after Mr. Leslie Hotson has discovered a few more letters to Harriet.

What, then, are we to make of him? Was he the "*spirit di titano*" that Carducci called him, placing him among the epic heroes, or only an "ineffectual angel"? Was he the spiritual son of Plato and Sophocles, or only a willing slave of Godwin? Our answer can be no single one of these; but he was all of them in part. In many of his actions and thoughts he seemed only a child; but he himself once said, "If I should die tomorrow, I should have lived to be as old as my grandfather". His romanticism was of the purest in his age; there is nothing unwholesome and decadent in his most impossible dreams and imaginings, at least in the manner in which Byron is often decadent.

And yet, when biographers and critics have had their way with him, there remain always the boy who sailed paper boats on the river, the youth who cast bottled-up messages into the sea, the quick, keen searcher, the bright eyes and swift movement of him, as well as the high (but not shrill) voice, and his torrent of speech. How much more to our purpose is the picture of him which Leigh Hunt gives us: ". . . a youth, not come to his full growth; very gentlemanly, earnestly gazing at every bright object that interested him, and quoting the Greek dramatists." There is something so engaging here that the too-ready superlatives of his enthusiastic admirers are not required to stir us; he was not so much a man as a disembodied force.

What this force was lies almost beyond human analysis. Kindness, courage, the all-too-rare ability to become righteously indignant at injustice, the strength of a slender reed bowed by the wind, a luminous preoccupation with thought, the healthy urge to grapple with, not escape from, the world—these are part of it. What he was as a man becomes clearer with the years; but the world is learning ever more fully what he means to the spirit of humanity.* To the revolutionary in mankind, to that element which purges and cuts away the festering wounds of social sys-

*STUDIES GREEN AND GRAY, Henry Newbolt, (1926): "No other poet has come so near to a vision so capable of transforming human life."

tems, he gave more of an impetus than we yet realize. He has done more than any poet since his time to further the cause of humanitarianism and to direct the thoughts of men toward the correction of social abuses so prevalent from his day to this. He did what he could in the only way he knew; and the fact that he was impractical seems, at this distant hour, no reproach for one who did so much in spite of folly. His star shines clearly in two firmaments—he was a man of letters and a man whose heart, filled with wild dreams for it, was always with mankind.

by James Still

MOUNTAIN TWILIGHT

They who are strong have claimed an earthly peace,
Gathering their strength in this treasured hour
When the winds hush, the muted waters cease,
And fog with misty wings has raised a tower
Of silence as a harbor for the stars:
When hills have cleft the sky with brooding peaks
Thrust in the purple bowl, raised solemn bars
Against all utterance, he who then speaks
Shall in this mighty breathlessness be heard.
They shall be heard, the weary and the spent,
The broken at the wheel, the fledgling bird,
Each grievous thought, each yearning here unspent
Shall have its reckoning when the hills confide.
They shall find strength where peace and time abide.

by Edd Winfield Parks

EUGENE O'NEILL'S SYMBOLISM

OLD GODS FOR NEW

WHEN Eugene O'Neill's latest play, *Days Without End*, was produced, the New York dramatic critics were quite evidently bewildered, and were exceedingly frank in voicing their disapproval. Perhaps their dislike for O'Neill's subject-matter was to be expected, since the critics in most cases are flip gentlemen eager for a wisecrack or an epigram and they were nurtured in the iconoclastic school of realism. But the bewilderment (only too apparent because it was never admitted) is a sad commentary: from the evidence of the reviews they might never have seen or read an O'Neill play before. They seemed to have no conception of the intricate, varied symbolism which runs through his dramas, and which differs only in kind from that in his latest play. Instead of criticising the validity of this symbolism, one typically pontifical remark was that "somebody should tell Mr. O'Neill that a crucifix is a beginning, not an end".

A crucifix may be either beginning or end; it may have and does have many meanings to many different people. But as symbol or reality it is never cheap, it is not a subject for meaningless epigrams. In this play the crucifix gives a meaning and a direction to life, in precisely the same fashion that O'Neill has previously used other philosophical symbols to give life an inner meaning. And Eugene O'Neill does not value it lightly, in this theatrical presentation of religious emotion, with the result that the critics must make light of it.

To O'Neill, such distortion need not be surprising, for no playwright has suffered more from interpreters who refused to allow him those qualities which they lack in themselves. They made of him a realist. Such an interpretation was not completely unjust or untrue; it was only half-just, half-truth. O'Neill had all the trappings of realism, but he had something more: a

mysticism which was, at base, only a washed form of religion. By his use of sociological and psychological symbolism, and in large part concealed by the crude vocabulary which a fashionable realism demanded, this mysticism, this essentially religious element, remained subdued. But to the careful reader it was ever-present, although in the successive plays it seemed ever-shifting, as though the dramatist's subconscious mind had sensed the futility of each particular symbol once he had embodied it within a play.

Yet, as long as these symbols were modern—that is, as long as they were rationalistic or sociological or mechanistic, when they set up as gods something which could never be God—they were either accepted or unnoticed. In 1931 the discerning Joseph Wood Krutch could see this modernity and approve it: "They, better than any other, represent the 'world view' of today, and they, as a matter of fact, constitute the only inclusive theory of human conduct which would not render any drama based upon it anachronistic or 'poetic' in the very sense that O'Neill is most anxious to avoid. . . . The greatness of his plays lies in the fact that they achieve a grandeur which their rational framework is important even to suggest. Man, deprived of the importance which Religion conferred when it made him important to the universe as a whole, here raises himself by his own bootstraps, and by the very strength and articulateness of his passions asserts the dignity which a rationalistic psychology denies him".

What Mr. Krutch refuses to admit is that O'Neill in every play adopted a mythologic or pseudo-religious symbolism which would give man importance. Man does not raise himself by his own bootstraps into importance; he is given importance by philosophies that are as irrational as religion. As long as the dramatist used these modern and artificial symbols, his work was accepted as serious and searching explorations of the human mind and soul; when he returned to the verities, for precisely the same purpose, his work is sneeringly dismissed as "sophomoric".

It requires only a brief study of O'Neill's symbolism to realize that this adoption of religious mythology was logical and inevitable, that it differs only in degree from his previous use of rationalistic philosophy as the framework for his plays, and that it

has kept Eugene O'Neill the artist from being drowned in the same well of self-pity which has closed over such realists as Sinclair Lewis and Theodore Dreiser.

II

With the advent of science came the seeming need for a new symbolism. The day of mythological gods and heroes was past; even the moral order no longer carried a vital power. For a new day a new and fresh power was needed, and it was found in the scientific laws which, men suddenly discovered, were the true if inanimate rulers of the universe. Writers could not accept the myths of yesterday, as Herman Melville recognized when he wrote that "great geniuses are a part of their times, they themselves are the times, and possess a corresponding coloring". But he was in part ahead of his time, since we in America did not grasp the scientific and natural symbolism in *Moby Dick* until long after Melville was dead. He used a form in which the people of his day could not believe: he took for a springboard into the exploration of the unknowable soul, not an outworn mythology, but the sea and a man's relentless search for a white whale. Nature became the tragic force, and *Moby Dick* the *deus ex machina*. Ibsen made of heredity a tragic force, in *Ghosts*; Hauptmann made of social pressure and economic want a similar force in *The Weavers*. Gone in these plays were the great men who suffered from Nemesis, when pride had grown too big for a finite universe, gone were they who wove their own undoing through one false step which led on to another, and on eventually to destruction. Men became toys in the hands of a natural, scientific fate, or of an economic law which was equally inexorable. They were but pawns who strutted on the stage of life, and the dramatic pawns which reflected life could no longer joust even with the minor gods.

For this small creature was the new symbolism created. Man must not be portrayed as ennobled, but realistically, as only a trifle above the animals. Dramatic conventions followed the conventional scientific thought of the day.

O'Neill also has followed these modern conventions, and in the effort to express them in drama he has run the gamut of

these symbolisms. In the early one-act plays he placed man against nature. He wrote of *The Moon of the Caribbees*: "the spirit of the sea—a big thing—is in this play the hero. . . Smitty in the stuffy grease-paint atmosphere of *In the Zone* is magnified into a hero who attracts our sentimental sympathy. In *The Moon*, posed against a background of that beauty, sad because it is eternal, which is one of the revealing moods of the sea's truth, his silhouetted gestures of self-pity are reduced to their proper significance, his thin whine of weakness is lost in the silence which it was mean enough to disturb, we get the perspective to judge him—and the others—and we find his sentimental posing much more out of harmony with truth, much less in tune with beauty, than the vulgarity of his mates". Man must, according to this conventional idea, be reduced to a state where only vulgarity is decent, and the noble savage alone is in harmony with nature. This was an idea that O'Neill was to use in later plays, but never as successfully as in *The Moon*. The idea is old, older than Rousseau, although it has been posed, especially in the new literature about the negro, as modern. Essentially, it denies grandeur to man until he becomes again close kin to the beasts of the field. Such men can struggle, at best, inarticulately; the drama; unfortunately, for such subjects, is articulate conflict. Man beginning to think may be a fit subject for sociological or psychological investigation, but he is too weak stuff for drama.

But the subject fascinated O'Neill—as in turn most contemporary substitutes for religion have fascinated him. (Perhaps the most significant indication of their weakness is the rapidity with which capable minds have adopted and abandoned them). He tried again in *The Hairy Ape* to dramatize this theme: "it was a symbol of man, who has lost his old harmony with nature, the harmony which he used to have as an animal and has not acquired in a spiritual way. Thus, not being able to find it on earth nor in heaven, he's in the middle, taking the 'woist punches from bot' of 'em'. This idea was expressed in Yank's speech. The public saw just the stoker, not the symbol, and the symbol makes the play either important or just another play. Yank can't go forward, and so he tries to go back. This is what his

shaking hands with the gorilla meant. But he can't go back to 'belonging' either. The gorilla kills him. The subject here is the same ancient one that always was and always will be the one subject for drama, and that is man and his struggle with his own fate. The struggle used to be with the gods, but is now with himself, his own past, his attempt 'to belong'."

Thus O'Neill attempts to dramatize one phase of evolution. He sees clearly the eternal subject for drama, but he attempts to restate it in impossible modern terms. Man's struggle continues to be with whatever gods there are, or whatever gods man may create: ultimately, perhaps, with himself. Man's place in the universe has long puzzled, and will long continue to puzzle, the strongest minds; it is tough meat for philosophical and religious thought. The process of evolution, the problem of man's place in the world, may be a *part of drama*, but it is not drama. Human beings may and do symbolize qualities, characteristics, states of being, but they are not within themselves symbols. And the hairy ape is a symbol. He is never a person, never conscious of himself as an entity; he is only a missing link. It would be as fitting to declare that the gorilla who flings himself against the bars of his cage is a great tragic figure as it would be to call O'Neill's hairy ape "tragic". For tragedy requires nobility and comprehension, not weakness and feeble-mindedness.

// Yet it is amusing to see critics who hailed that play now damn *Days Without End* as sophomoric. The ultimate symbol is the same, and the ultimate longing: man's desire to find a satisfactory spiritual peace, a place 'to belong' in this world. Apparently, when stated in scientific terms, the idea is revolutionary, and marks O'Neill as a great thinker; when stated in terms of religion, the idea becomes laughable. Perhaps a more careful reading of the two plays will demonstrate that it is the first idea which, if not absurd, is at least not a fit subject for the drama.

In *The Hairy Ape* O'Neill has abandoned the more valid part of *The Moon*, the tragic loneliness of a pitiful man against the sea, of man's weakness in the face of an element he cannot control. For all of O'Neill's analysis, the person, not the sea, makes *The Moon* a dramatic success, as persons will always make or break

plays. And in one other one-act play he wove the struggle of a man (always a man against nature, never as in the *Hairy Ape*, man against nature) against brute nature into a high drama, *Ile*. Here is a man obsessed with an overwhelming idea, a tight, hard-fisted, just New England sea captain who has failed for the first time to secure his quota of oil is faced with failure, with mutiny, and with the prospect of a wife going slowly insane, but in spite of all, when the ice breaks and the whales appear, the captain returns to the chase. The background is deliberately meager; all the overtones, the true background, are in the struggle shadowed forth rather than expressed between man and his ancient enemy, nature. As in all great plays there are two conflicts: the internal struggle in Captain Keeney between pride and compassion; the external struggle between a captain and his crew, a husband and his wife, a man and the universe. Because he is above all else the primitive man, the proud hunter, he makes his decision, and relentlessly, with nature a *deus ex machina* as inevitable as the Greek gods, tragedy results.

Æsthetically, *Ile* is artistically sound and well handled. It is modern in form, lean and spare in structure, with no surplus matter and no sentimentality, but with an almost classic restraint in writing and in characterization, as though the author were reluctant to approach the catastrophe. But the play succeeds because of the captain: if not a great protagonist, he is at least a dignified one, and his tragedy is not tinged with the pathos which surrounds the tragedies of little men.

One quality the play lacks: elevation of language. The speech remains prosy when it should have sweeping movement, color and grandeur. This is a defect common in all the plays, and felt more keenly in later, more complex characterizations, but in no play is this inability to handle language more obvious than in *Ile*: there are moments here, and later, when the flexible power of a mighty and tumultuous blank verse would take speaker and auditor alike away from prosiness, away from the too real present, into an inner, more comprehensive reality. But O'Neill has always been too much the modern, too much concerned with portraying through changing symbols "that self obsession which is the particular discount we moderns have" ever to get

away from wordage into the deeper region of language. His distrust of poetry is only too obvious, and he has remarked that we "have endured too much from the banality of surfaces", but he has too often given us prosy characters mouthing prosy speeches for him to complain too bitterly of surface realities. And he has done it, as in *The Hairy Ape*, in the name of art, forgetting that such prosiness is sure indication of the surface type rather than of the revealed individual. Even when his characters are most fully realized—as in *Ile*, *The Great God Brown*, *Mourning Becomes Electra*, and *Days Without End*—they suffer from a wordy, groping inarticulateness.

This leads me to believe that a discarded dogma of Aristotelian criticism may well be revived to meet a modern need. One cardinal tenet of that academic criticism was that a tragic protagonist must be a great personage, so that his own fall would shake the world, or at least a portion of it. Today the pomp of kings has gone, and the mighty have fallen, but the old rule has not quite lost its power. The tragic protagonist, though he be a street sweeper, must be individualized until within himself he has elements of greatness. It is not enough that he shall be part of a social order, a communist or capitalist or seaman—in other words, a type. The type may be useful in propaganda, but in the drama he or it is dead weight. And the protagonist must be given an innate nobility for a second, less obvious reason: he must be an articulate person. As long as realism demands that a stoker shall speak like a stoker, a street sweeper like a street sweeper, and a college boy like a Broadway columnist, then they cannot be considered subjects for any drama which seeks higher levels than the most pitifully obvious statements of cause and effect. Such persons may have emotions of sufficient depth, but the tragic and dramatic figure must do more than feel; he must express his emotion to an audience. Contrary to all the tenets of realism, emotion is not expressed simply through words; emotion is language, and the two must be subtly fused into one. Without this fusion, the actor talks about, but never reveals, his emotion.

This problem of expression is peculiarly important with Eugene O'Neill because he has so often tripped over it. Time and again

he has tried to explain to the public, through letters to newspapers or to friendly critics, precisely what he intended a play to mean. Yet he has consistently refused to put into the mouths of his characters a language which would carry his shades of meaning. In one of the least successful of his plays, *Welded*, he has the lover-artist Michael tell Eleanor that he wishes to express his feelings, but that he can only "stutter like an idiot". This is begging the question. There are emotions too deep and too complex for expression, but the dramatist must manage to imply, must in general express these emotions in language which carries a rounded meaning. It is all very proper for a Penrod, or an ordinary mortal, to stutter at such moments, but seventeen is a ludicrous age, and the ordinary mortal remains inarticulate most of his life. But the artist Michael, or the Hairy Ape, or the Cabots in *Desire Under the Elms* are not intended to be ridiculous personages; they are simply inarticulate persons groping for words at the moments when clear poetic expression is vitally needed. Great dramatists have achieved this necessary theatre before; to be reckoned as great, dramatists must again achieve it. In O'Neill's case this is the more necessary because he has often refused to allow his symbolism to be an underlying current felt under the smooth surface of an otherwise straight-forward drama—the manner in which Chekhov used symbolism—but has attempted to make symbolic the action, the characters, and even the artificial devices of the theatre.

These obvious devices need little attention, for they have received many examinations—apparently on the theory that great subtlety must be hidden in this experimental stage technique. One obvious attempt at symbolism was the division of each act in *Beyond The Horizon* into two scenes, one indoors and one out, to suggest a tide-like rhythm in the lives of the characters. O'Neill has experimented also with symbolic names for his characters (in *The Great God Brown*, for example), and with the use of masks, of asides which revealed thought, and even, in *Days Without End*, of two actors to play the dual personality of one person. Such experimentation, for all the fanfare of publicity which has surrounded it, is basically superficial. It indicates that the artist's discontent with his basic subject-matter is carried over

to discontent with his medium. "But the medium was not a primary fault; the essential faults were in muddled expression, and even more in that the artist had settled upon no point of view, that he had no philosophy of life.

He had, indeed, a great many philosophies, which reflected many contemporary points of view. One idea which became exceedingly popular was that man achieves immortality through his children. O'Neill made a slight use of it in the climax of *Welded*; he made it the underlying motif of *The Fountain*. Ponce de Leon searches fruitlessly for youth, and at last, when he has given up hope, he finds a vicarious immortality in the youth of his nephew. The intellectual idea was simply the wish-illusion of fearsome generations, the outgrowth of a scientific philosophy which denied the possibility of God yet felt the imperious need of some substitute to fill his place. O'Neill dramatized this concept of immortality—but, in spite of some excellent writing, the intellectual framework is so absurd that Ponce de Leon's vicarious salvation at the end is hopeless *tour de force*.

Yet the play might, one feels, have been a great one, if O'Neill had retained throughout the play the motif which he explained in a note on the program: "The idea of writing a *Fountain* came on finally from my interest in the recurrence in folklore of the beautiful legend of a healing spring of eternal youth." Unfortunately, folklore came into conflict with a modern philosophy, and the philosophy prevails, until near the conclusion de Leon rationalizes (in a manner which seems strange when contrasted with the theme of the play) his belief: "One must accept, absorb, give back, become oneself a symbol". This is the best affirmation that O'Neill's philosophy at the time would admit. Certainly it had nothing to do with the folk-consciousness of which he speaks; instead of writing out of that, he has attempted to combine the simple with the esoteric.

// Time and again, he has attempted to explain simplicity with a false profundity. Twice he took the negro as protagonists, and in his hands the customary noble savage idea took a queer turn. In *The Emperor Jones* a half-savage is pitted against savages. But the romantic noble savage delusion has one advantage: it emphasizes the individual person. Although the intellectual con-

tent, when reduced to outline, is fairly meager, the portrayal of the obsessed Jones has a majestic dignity that makes the performance impressive. Once again the antique yet never old theme of man against the universe holds the stage. Man in queer and tattered garments, semi-ridiculous, but after all a man. When such a character appears in a reasonably good play, we recognize immediately that the underlying symbolism is, in the final analysis, far less important than the play itself.

What we also realize is that, for the dramatist as well, the symbolism must be subordinated. In *All God's Chillun Got Wings* the surface play can never get started, it is so heavily weighted with propaganda. Freudian interpretation of sex dominates this play of miscegenation. The "noble savage" motif can hardly be said to appear for the simple reason that nobility, in the larger sense, never appears. But the negro is portrayed as noble: he has the necessary characteristics but he fails to achieve life. Like most sociological tracts the play is concerned with types. But the type is an abstraction which exists nowhere. By a dramatic rendition of what happens when black marries white it might be possible to adumbrate the entire problem. But for O'Neill, the problem, not the person, is the play. He is content with adumbration; he desires to state the facts clearly. Here, as elsewhere, the symbolism is the real play, stalking the stage, and forcing the puppet actors to peep around it. What he feared was literal realism, but this fear betrayed him into such overwriting that inner and outer realism alike are gone.

Freudian symbolism of sex bulks large in the later plays of O'Neill. Sex and religion become in his mind inextricably intermixed. *Desire Under the Elms* is a weak and melodramatic study in sex obsession, and unusually shoddy in language. // But *Mourning Becomes Electra* is a grave, dignified, and successful attempt to jazz up a Greek tragedy, by motivating the action with psychological complications and endowing each character with repressions or frustrations or fixations, until the dramatic struggle becomes "a conflict between puritanism and healthy love". Much of this psychological symbolism also motivated *Strange Interlude* and *The Great God Brown*, though in these plays a more dominant motif was the religion of art. According to this belief, the

creative power, some vague part of nature, would perform the age-long functions of religion.

It is around this theme of creation that O'Neill comes nearest to integrating his philosophy. To him, the fountain was a symbol of life, tossing its little drops high in the air. They had myriad shapes and colors: some were caught in the light, others dully dropped back, or burst into a miniature rainbow of light. It did not greatly matter. The essential thing is life: more drops must be propagated that more drops may be tossed into the air. The same basic theme governs *Strange Interlude*. Men and women are shells, acting a part, growing to other people, then away from them, but under and above all is life, taking care that new individuals shall be brought forth. Men and women cannot resist forces stronger than themselves, cannot tamper with the laws of nature; any attempt to do so results in tragedy. As the old people prepare to go off the stage, always there is the son of one couple, the daughter of another, to take their places. The cycle is complete, never broken, never ceasing. //

And with what strange finality does this Freudian interpretation recall the older, simpler rites of the Greeks, when men made sacrifice to the goddess of fertility and the song of the goat gave the name *tragedy*. In denying importance to persons, O'Neill goes back unwittingly to the oldest of religions (disguised as the newest of science) to give some meaning to life.

These plays are too confused with symbolism to take on life. In *The Great God Brown* the little drops of water become all-important, at least to themselves, and the play receives importance through them. Men play upon one another, wear masks to the world, but underneath those masks the souls grow, warp, shrivel, rot. We become a part of others, and others become a part of us, but all without understanding, as we grope in the world's half-light which blind us more effectually than any darkness. The light which O'Neill can see has little illumination, and offers no insight save for a creative force which the characters "do not clearly comprehend". O'Neill defines his purpose as showing "the mystery any one man or woman can feel but not understand as the meaning of any event—or accident—in any life on earth". Significantly, at that time O'Neill endowed

Cybele, the pagan earth mother, and Dion with this mystical element—but the mysticism is present, and in such a way as to accentuate the importance of individuals.

The play might be satisfying, but the philosophy behind it was not. "The playwright today," wrote O'Neill, "must dig at the roots of the sickness of today as he feels it—the death of the old God and the failure of science and materialism to give any satisfying new one for the surviving primitive religious instinct to find a meaning for life in. . .". It led him to search through many mythologies, even led him in *Dynamo* to envision a man who saw a new god in the whirling wheels of machinery and the weird power of electricity. Although the play deals with religious mania, the implication is obvious that religion is dead, and that man must create a new religion to take its place. It is a dramatic statement of the sentence quoted above.

But when a man searches too intensively—and, in O'Neill's case too extensively—for the meaning of life, he may miss life itself. The mythology of the Greeks may be outworn, but it served to give a purpose and meaning to life, and to reveal humanity underneath. That is all the Christian mythology, or Brahmin or Norse or even Freudian mythology, can accomplish. Joseph Wood Krutch praises O'Neill most highly because "his dramas have nothing archaic about them. They do not seek the support of a poetic faith in any of the conceptions which served the classical dramas but are no longer valid for us. They are, on the contrary, almost cynically 'modern' in their acceptance of a rationalistic view of man and the universe. Yet he has created his characters upon so large a scale that their downfall is made once more to seem not merely pathetic but terrible".

In all save the final sentence, this criticism misses the point entirely. To call O'Neill's view of life rationalistic is to mis-read the plays. True, he did not accept the Christian mythology until *Days Without End*; what he did was to create, or at least to borrow, a dozen pseudo-religious mythologies and symbolisms which are as irrational as ancient myth. If ever any man viewed life through the spectacles of mysticism, that man was Eugene O'Neill. His realism, in the final analysis, is limited to dialogue, and realism hampered rather than helped him. And the lack of

a unified point of view, the inability to find a purpose in life—what Krutch calls his cynical modernity—has simply led him to minimize the individuality of his characters, to substitute a jumpy and involved series of chaotic modern faiths for a single clear and ordered faith. What Krutch forgets, what O'Neill has too often forgotten, is that this faith, meaning, or complex (whatever name may be given it) is at most a background. It is the skeleton framework, not the completed structure. It never appears distinctly; it simply is. And the playwright has attempted to find too many frameworks on which to hang his characters, without ever believing in any one of them. This affects the single play only when the idea is basically sound, and overpowers the dramatist, or when it is absurd, and the play is patently unconvincing. But it does affect vitally the entire body of his work, and in O'Neill's case the fact seems apparent that his shifting allegiances philosophically have marred many single plays, and have removed the cumulative effect of a continued and unified effort.

III

To get back to the original point, why have the critics almost unanimously damned *Days Without End* as "sophomoric", as "an emotional binge", and as "collegiate theorizing". In the past they have justly acclaimed O'Neill as the greatest American dramatist; now they turn upon him with a fury which is, perhaps, not altogether explained by their verdict that *Days Without End* is a bad play.

Actually, when examined without bias, the play is well up to the high standard of O'Neill's better plays. It has the same strength and the same weaknesses. It lacks the tautly compact and the classic perfection of *Ile*: a play possessing a valid symbolism that portrayed nature as representative of God, and that achieves magnitude despite its small compass; it lacks the close unity of *The Emperor Jones*; above all, it lacks the spaciousness and the comprehension of *The Great God Brown*. In that play a mind can walk about, can explore itself while observing exploration in the character's minds, and can identify itself with those characters emotionally. *Days Without End* has a more restricted emotional compass; the framework is more rigid.

But the basic ideas in all the plays differs in terminology rather than in actuality. Once again Eugene O'Neill is attempting to give a meaning to life, but he has found that meaning in the Catholic cross, not in the fountain or the dynamo or the sexual delta. O'Neill has not even abandoned his modern psychology, for in this work he makes use of dual personalities and of Freudian psychoanalysis. He uses these dubious sciences, however, in the attempt to explain a man's recovery of his faith, and in that, it seems, he has proven himself sophomoric. Yet the old strength is here: the ability to reveal man and woman is just as apparent as in *Strange Interlude*; the same old fear of literal realism has led him into an intricate and closely-knitted plot, and into portraying John Loving as two characters on the stage, a device which sometimes seems a superficial means of attaining profundity; the same ability to handle pure emotion artistically. There are also the same weaknesses of over-writing and of occasional faulty expression, but they are all elements which have appeared before.

It may be that O'Neill has portrayed the liberal thinker of the last decade a little too exactly, in the early part of John Loving's characterization, for these gentlemen's comfort. Possibly the picture sketched of Loving by Father Baird is in part O'Neill's own spiritual autobiography, but that is a point I am willing to leave to the professional psychoanalysts. One thing is sure: many men did go through approximately this spiritual evolution:

... I was the heathen to him and he was bound he'd convert me to something. First it was Atheism unadorned. Then it was Atheism wedded to Socialism. But Socialism proved too weak-kneed a mate and the next I heard Atheism was living in free love with Anarchism, with a curse by Nietzsche to bless the union. And then came the Bolshevik dawn. . . He was particularly delighted when he thought they'd abolished love and marriage, and he couldn't contain himself when the news came they'd turned naughty school-boys and were throwing spitballs at Almighty God and had supplanted Him with the slave-owning State—the most grotesque god that ever came of Asia! . . . I knew Communism wouldn't hold him long. . . Soon his letters became full of pessimism, and disgust with all sociological nostrums. . . what do you think was his next hiding place? Religion, no

less—but as far away as he could run from home—in the defeatist mysticism of the East. . . But the next I knew, he was through with the East. It was not for the Western soul, he decided, and he was running through Greek philosophy and found a brief shelter in Pythagoras and numerology. Then came a letter which revealed him bogged down in evolutionary scientific truth again—a dyed-in-the-wool mechanist . . . I enjoyed a long interval of peace from his missionary zeal, until finally he wrote me he was married. That letter was full of more ardent hymns of praise for a mere living woman than he'd ever written before about any of his great spiritual discoveries . . . He seems to be fixed in his last religion. I hope so. The only constant faith I've found in him before was his proud belief in himself as a bold Anti-christ.

This "hide-and-go-seek" mental career does not precisely parallel the dramatic production of Eugene O'Neill. But there are some unusual similarities: he made the sea a god in his early one-act plays; he wedded atheism to revolutionary propaganda in *The Hairy Ape*; he put more than touches of anarchism and of social reform into such plays as *The Emperor Jones*, *All God's Chillin Got Wings*, and *The First Man*; with his mechanistic philosophy he created God from the dynamo; he made use of sociological nostrums in some plays already mentioned, and particularly in *Desire Under the Elms*; and he made the creative life-force carry the underlying purposiveness of being in *The Fountain*, *Strange Interlude*, and *The Great God Brown*. Of all the contemporary panaceas, the "Bolshevik dawn" alone seems to have left him unmoved, and something of Sovietism might be read into his comedy *Marco Millions* with its portrayal of Marco Polo as the original Babbitt—but this would be, at best, a strained and probably unjust interpretation. No injustice is needed to show that O'Neill's mental evolution has resembled that of John Loving, or that he has made each nostrum into a pseudo-religion.

And O'Neill was not alone. The critic and thinkers of his era did exactly the same thing. But they have remained stationary, continuing to preach the same gospels from the same soap-boxes. This they do in the name of rationalism, but the essential fact is that each belief is a panacea which acts temporarily—perhaps in some cases permanently—as a substitute for religion. Not

one of the ideas is truly rational. Each gives to men a reason for existence, but none was satisfactory to O'Neill for very long. Yet he could not believe, with his character Loving, that "we are all the slave of meaningless chance"; he belonged instead with the idealistic John who felt that "a new savior must be born who will reveal to us how we can be saved from ourselves".

Only the words in this plea are new. Always, Eugene O'Neill has expressed his temporary theory of the infinite beyond the finite; he has simply changed from the terms of philosophy to the words of religion. *Days Without End* is a sincere and moving play, as fine in conception and execution as any of the plays except *Ile* and *The Great God Brown*, but it has been condemned by men who refused to accept these words without perceiving that it has the same basic symbolism which animates all the other plays. It gives meaning to life through religion, but it expresses, after all, the immediate philosophy of Eugene O'Neill.

by Arthur Link Newton

PURPOSE

The cumulative toxin of this smooth-blown panacea
In slow-swift, fibrous lassitude
Binds then rheumatic warriors. Forgetting now the haughty
Strife they join the multitude
Of vain cadavers.

by Henry Alonzo Myers

THE ANALYSIS OF LAUGHTER

AN incident in Plato's *Symposium* affords us a glimpse of one of the earliest attempts to take laughter seriously, and at the same time suggests a prophecy concerning the ultimate fate of all subsequent attempts. As we near the end of the dialogue, the subject under discussion has been adequately expounded from the point of view of each of the characters, the small hours of morning are at hand, and the company is ready to adjourn. Still Socrates rambles on, unwearied, pouring his wisdom into the ears of two faithful companions. At this point Plato mentions the subject of comedy. "Socrates compelled the other two to acknowledge that the genius of comedy was the same as that of tragedy, and that the true artist in tragedy was an artist in comedy also. To this they were constrained to assent, being drowsy, and not quite following the argument. And first of all Aristophanes dropped off to sleep."

Such was the charm of the first theory of comedy! We leave the symposium with an unforgettable picture of an eminent philosopher putting an eminent comic poet to sleep with a lecture on the Comic Spirit.

There is evidence in another dialogue (*Apology*) of a certain coolness between the serious philosophers and the eminent exponent of the Comic Spirit. On trial, Socrates says: "I do not know, and cannot tell of my accusers—unless in the chance case of a comic poet." And in the same dialogue, he refers to certain indignities placed upon him in Aristophanes' *Clouds*. "It is", he says, "just what you persons in the audience have yourselves seen in the comedy of Aristophanes—a man named Socrates there borne about (suspended in a basket) and saying that he walks on air, and talking a deal of nonsense concerning matters of which I do not pretend to know either much or little."

We may assume that some similar irreverence on the part of comedians caused the measure of distrust which Plato elsewhere

evidences toward them. In the *Laws*, we are told that if comic poets are admitted to the ideal state they may be allowed only to jest, and not to ridicule the citizens in earnest. In the *Republic* we are told that it is wrong to attribute laughter to the gods, as Homer does, and that worthy persons, such as guardians, will not allow themselves to be overcome by this infectious emotion. Elsewhere in the same dialogue, we are told that children prefer comedy to tragedy, and that comedies are to be performed only by slaves and hirelings, although free men may attend them to learn, by contrast, what is serious and worthy of their attention. Finally we are warned that, unless reason controls mirth, we may suffer the consequences of attending comedies by becoming buffoons at home.

These remarks, which show us the great thinker judiciously weighing the merits of putting a censorship on laughter, exhaust the content of the dialogues on the subject of laughter and comedy. Aside from these, we have only the mute testimony of Aristophanes concerning Socrates' great theory. And in respect to this testimony, it is in just such a manner that the Comic Spirit manifests itself!

Consider, for example, the misfortune of Aristotle. Surely there was never a graver, a more majestic figure, never a mind more fitted to weigh and adjust the elements of the sciences and of philosophy. Of all men, nature selected and designed him as the one who could, in the gravest manner possible, take the Comic Spirit seriously. And we notice, in his works, that he has the air of a man who has got this problem off his mind. Whenever, in his grave, impartial consideration of propositions, syllogisms, figures of speech, and first principles, he is confronted by an element touching upon comedy, he tells us, in so many words, and with an air of triumph: I have taken care of these matters elsewhere. There are many of these assurances that all is well, that the matter has been taken care of elsewhere, but when, not in doubt, but with a kind of awed expectancy, we turn to elsewhere, what do we find? His little monograph on comedy and laughter has been unhappily mislaid . . . Time and the Comic Spirit have had their turn with philosophy, and have turned a prank upon the great master which even the student Alexander might not have dared.

The breach which early widened between philosophy and the

Comic Spirit is not without its underlying cause: the path of the man who attempts to take laughter seriously is beset with a fundamental difficulty. He who takes laughter seriously deals with an hypothesis and illustrations, and as a good craftsman, a maker of hypotheses, he evaluates his work by the number of illustrations which plainly fit into it. Hence, to the author's mind, the successful theory seems to sweep everything before it. A host of illustrations—witticism, anecdote, prank, and comic spectacle—fall into the slots cunningly devised by the theory.

But the reader, alas! the more numerous and apt the illustrations the more he smiles and chuckles: each anecdote, each witticism, renders him less able to pass judgment on the theory itself. Everyone interested in theories of comedy has had an experience resembling that of the student who was given an article on the ethical elements in wit and humor (*International Journal of Ethics*, vol. xix, p. 488) to read. After he had finished he could neither remember the ethical elements nor forget the illustrations. One anecdote in particular haunted him, the one about the hunter in a fog who, uncertain whether his quarry was a cow or a deer, fired very cautiously "so as to sort of miss it if it was a cow and hit it if it was a deer." The student never was able to extract the ethical element from this anecdote. Did the moral law perchance cause the hunter to miss? Out of his bewilderment the student arrived at the remarkable conclusion that the anecdote was an illustration of Aristotle's famous maxim: "In comedy the arrow misses the mark!"

Such is one difficulty besetting a theory of comedy: the more apt it is, the more illustrations it has; the happier the illustrations, the less able the reader is to entertain the theory. On the other hand, there is always the even greater danger of accepting the intellectual post mortem in place of the living spirit of laughter, the danger involved in taking laughter so seriously that at the end there is nothing comic and nothing laughable left. "Laughter", says Henri Bergson, "is gaiety itself. But the philosopher who gathers a handful may find that the substance is scanty, and the aftertaste bitter." And that, perhaps, is precisely the trouble with his celebrated *Le Rire*.

II.

Intellectual post mortems have often been performed on laughter in modern times; indeed, the traditional objects of laughter for philosophers, the universe for Democritus and the circle and tangent for Schopenhauer, are not farther apart than the various theoretical conclusions based on the fascinating data of comedy. Objections have been raised to each theory, and these objections center in the fact that no intellectual analysis seems to fit all possible types and examples of comic situations. Most analyses fail to cover the ground for an obvious reason: they are limited by the point of view they assume in approaching the subject. Some refer only to the nature of the comic situation; others refer only to the psychological springs of laughter.

In considering the nature of laughter one must consider both the inner and the outer aspects of the problem, looking into our nature for the springs of laughter and seeking the essential element in the external objects or situations which excite it. Kant, for example, is thinking of the internal springs of action when he speaks of a sudden expectation coming to nothing as the cause of laughter. Hobbes has the same point of view. "Laughter is nothing else but sudden glory arising from some sudden conception of some eminence in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly." This approach to the problem is again illustrated by Spinoza's definition of mirth. "Mirth", he tells us, "is pleasure which, in so far as it is referred to the body, consists in all parts of the body being equally affected; that is, the body's power of activity is increased or aided in such a manner that the several parts maintain their former proportion of motion or rest; therefore mirth is always good."

Opposed to this method, is the approach to the comic which concerns itself with a number of situations or objects which are known commonly to cause mirth. This empirical method searches for a principle, a common element, a category that will fit all comic situations. Following this method, Bergson found in the antithesis between the living and the mechanical the common element of all comic situations. Others have been content to state this common element more abstractly as incongruity. This is the category latent in Sidney's remarks in the *Apologie for Poetrie*, in Kant, in Hazlitt, and in Schopenhauer. The common element

in amusing situations is the incongruity between the two dominating aspects of each situation. Bergson alone has maintained that this incongruity of the comic situation may be stated in a form both specific and universal. The comic situation, he thinks, exhibits more than bare incongruity; it exhibits the specific incongruity between the mechanical and the living.

Returning to the subjective aspect of laughter, we find that there are three theories concerning the relation of laughter to the emotions. The first is that laughter is unemotional in character, that it occurs only in the absence of feeling. The second is that laughter is identified with one emotion only. The third is that the kinds of laughter distinguished by common sense—satire, wit, mirth, humor, etc.,—are explicable only on the grounds that laughter unites with various kinds and degrees of emotion. The first theory has found its exponent in Bergson, who treated laughter as a purely intellectual phenomenon. The weakness of the theory lies in its inability to distinguish good humor from ill humor, one kind of laughter from another. We can easily discount the second theory, which holds that laughter unites only with the feeling of malice (Plato, *Philebus*; Aristotle; Hobbes), for, in addition to suggesting that its proponents were men more laughed at than laughing, this theory fails utterly to account for the full gamut of mixed emotions. Laughter is not always malicious; our laughter is often colored with annoyance with the object, but it is equally often united with liking, respect, or reverence for the object. Again, pure amusement is often our only feeling toward an object or situation. Hence we are brought to the third theory, for which Spinoza has prepared an adequate ground-work. In considering the kinds of laughter he asks first: is laughter directed toward an object that we cherish, an object that we hate, or an object that arouses no other feeling? If it is directed toward an object cherished, he concludes that it takes the form of wit and humor; if it is directed toward an object hated, he concludes that it takes the form of derision, ridicule, or irony, and that such laughter hurts the subject as much as it does the object. Finally, if it is directed toward an object which arouses no other feeling, it takes the form of mirth, amusement, complete pleasure. It is surprising that, although isolated passages and remarks by Kant and others have been repeated again and again by historians of

theories of laughter, no one has found Spinoza's treatment of the emotions the solution to the problem of the kinds and degrees of laughter.

We find, then, certain conditions necessary for an analysis of laughter. First, we find that such an analysis must take into account both the subjective and the objective aspects of the problem, that it must account for degrees and kinds of laughter by considering the relation of laughter to other emotions, and that it must find the category common to all comic situations. These conditions apparently exclude the possibilities that laughter is either unemotional or identified with one emotion only; they imply, if we are to follow the rules of analysis, that the category common to comic situations must fit logically rather than metaphorically—that is to say, the category must spring from the nature of the situation and not be applied to it from without by simile or metaphor, a condition which only the category of incongruity seems to meet.¹

There are further conditions which we should keep in mind. In respect to laughter analysis occurs *after the fact*; therefore it is able to take into account consequences of laughter which are not necessarily foreseen by the man who laughs. A consequence of laughter may be that some of its forms and kinds serve as a social preventive or corrective; nevertheless we are not justified in assuming that a consequence of a particular kind of laughter is an essential characteristic of laughter in general.

These conditions for analysis in the realm of laughter naturally call to mind Bergson's *Le Rire*, partly because no other essay on the subject has been so widely received, partly because Bergson, philosopher of note, achieved eminence in the field by treating comedy as a subject of primary importance, and most of all because these

¹A recent student of laughter (Ralph Piddington, *The Psychology of Laughter*, London, 1933) has pointed out that, although all comic situations may be incongruous, not all incongruities occasion laughter. This observation is not a reflection on the theory that incongruity is the category common to comic situations; it is rather a proof that an analysis of laughter must never lose sight of the subject-object relation. Laughter is the response of a subject to an incongruous situation, yet an incongruous result which conflicts with an intense purpose does not arouse laughter. It is at this point that the analysis of laughter falls within the province of the competent psychologist, who can best determine what states of mind on the part of the subject prevent or alter the normal response to the incongruous. He also is best prepared to study the union of laughter with other emotions.

conditions flatly contradict his major theses. In the first place, Bergson believes that he has found an element, common to all comic situations, which goes beyond the bare category of incongruity; secondly, he ignores the mixture of laughter with other feelings by asserting that laughter occurs only in an absence of feeling; finally, he relates laughter in general to a consequence of a particular kind of laughter, namely, to social correction.

III.

Bergson's principles of comedy, like Athena, spring full-armed from his essay, and fall upon the unsuspecting reader, who must, in defence, go back to the development of thought foundational to the author's approach to laughter. For somewhere in front of the first page of Bergson's essay, as is true of most philosophical treatises, is a territory to be explored before we are prepared to criticize the work itself. This territory is a kind of magician's dressing room, where, in contrast to the treatise proper, rabbits are put into the hat. It is a world of first premises and assumptions, and these first premises and assumptions are of such importance that, like certain conventions of the theater, they impress their mold upon the whole production.

What, we may ask, are the first premises which determine the author's conclusions in the *Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*? Whence does he derive a principle, common to all comic situations, which goes beyond the bare category of incongruity? First, he sees reality under two aspects. Primarily, reality is something pushing, living, developing, a vital force, a principle of creative evolution. Encrusted on this primary aspect of reality, as it were, is a secondary aspect which takes the form of the mechanical, the automatic, the dead. Primarily, reality is tense, urgent, developing; secondarily it is fixed, rigid, static. We might compare primary reality to the *semper fluens nunc* of time, secondary reality to the fixed, three-dimensional objects in space. Hence, if primary reality is something always flowing, like time, it is obvious that we can never lay hold of it mentally with that ease notable in our apprehension of the static objects in space. Truth can only be had by an intuition which senses time as it goes by; that which rationalists ordinarily consider to be truth is really only the lifeless

skeleton of truth, only a "something mechanical encrusted on the living."

This shift of emphasis in the search for truth, from the fixed to the changing, we may call, with apologies to Kant and Dewey, the Munchausen revolution in philosophy, for it is quite evident that the intuitionists of the new time religion, of which Bergson was high priest, have turned the old rationalistic world inside out by the tail, transforming what was a vertebrate, that is, a world of outward change with a skeleton of fixed laws, into a crustacean with a hard, outward shell and dynamic, slithery inwards.

We notice about this Munchausen revolution in thought more noise than its facts seem to warrant; for the purpose of analysis it matters little whether the cosmos keeps its skeleton concealed, or wears it, like the oyster, on its sleeve; the factors of interest to analysis are the fixed and permanent elements, and these are present before and after the revolution in emphasis. There is, however, a further step, not implicit in the revolution itself, with which we are vastly concerned in the analysis of laughter. That step is the characterization of the outward shell of this brave new crustacean world as rigid, dead, *mechanical*. The introduction of the mechanical as a category of secondary reality is a step which we ought to watch, remembering that it is a long jump from a carapace to a jumping-jack, a step which can be covered only by a figure of speech. To speak of the living and the mechanical as the two important aspects of reality is to come closer to poetry than to logic.

As we approach the principles of comedy which Bergson has laid down, there is a suspicion in our minds, therefore, that Bergson in the very foundations of his thinking has sinned against one of the guiding principles of analysis. In his investigation he found two aspects of reality, the fixed and the changing. In seeking to describe the relationship between these aspects he did not let them speak for themselves, did not let their proper categories and characterizations spring out of their own natures; rather, he looked about him in common experience for a relation to apply *by analogy*. The relation which he chose from common experience is that between the mechanism and the living being; this relation he applied to the two important aspects of reality, the fixed and the

changing. Are we to accept such an obvious simile as the keystone of an arch of logical analysis?

Such are the premises which lie in advance of the first page. Turning to the pages of the tract proper, we find the principles of comedy based on these principles. These, briefly stated, are as follows:

1. It is evident that Bergson is undertaking an analysis of laughter in general and not the analysis of a particular kind of laughter. Such is his intention, as we learn from his first question. What does laughter mean? What is the basal element in the laughable? What common ground can we find between the grimace of a merry-andrew, a play upon words, an equivocal situation in a burlesque and a scene of high comedy?

2. The comic does not exist outside the realm of what is strictly human; there is nothing comic in nature alone, in a landscape or a natural phenomenon.

A landscape may be beautiful, charming and sublime, or insignificant and ugly; it will never be laughable. You may laugh at an animal but only because you have detected in it some human attitude or expression.

(We might note why this is obviously true if we accept incongruity as the category common to all comic situations. Incongruity demands two elements in a situation. In nature there is one only, the natural.)

3. The characteristic element in every comic situation may be traced to its source in the mechanical. It is inelasticity in human beings which amuses us. "We laugh every time a person gives us the impression of being a thing."

4. Laughter is distinctly social in character; its function is to serve as a preventive and corrective.

5. Laughter indicates an absence of feeling. Its appeal is to the intellect, and not to the heart.

Here I would point out . . . the *absence of feeling* which usually accompanies laughter . . . Indifference is its natural environment, for laughter has no greater foe than emotion . . . In a society composed of pure intelligences there would probably be no more tears though perhaps there would still be laughter.

(But not the *heartly* laughter, we might add, that common sense so easily distinguishes from other kinds.)

These principles reduce to three fundamental theses: (1) laughter has an intellectual rather than an emotional basis and character; (2) the source of the comic lies in the apprehension of "something mechanical encrusted on the living"; (3) a character of laughter *in general* is its social function as a form of punishment.

Bergson's only argument for one general kind of laughter rests on his statement that laughter occurs only in an *absence of feeling*. He should have said in the *absence of other strong feeling*. It is true that we are not amused when overcome by fear, pity, hope, or anguish; at the same time, it is likewise true that we are never angry, fearful, or hopeful in a situation that we recognize as amusing. Laughter is not a unique emotion in this respect; we cannot, for instance, feel angry unless there is, for the present at least, a suspension of other strong feeling, and the same is true of pity, fear, hope, remorse, anguish, and the entire list of emotions.

We must conclude, therefore, that Bergson's apparently acute observation serves as a false premise in making laughter intellectual and unemotional in character. We should not, however, go to the other extreme; while we cannot imagine laughter in a society of pure intelligences, neither can we imagine any emotion existing without some intellectual aspects. The emotions and the intellect are not as sharply divided as Bergson here seems to think.

The chief fault of the theory which makes laughter purely an intellectual phenomenon is its inability to account for the kinds and shades of laughter which common sense distinguishes. Bergson, starting out to find a common element in all kinds of laughter, ends by virtually denying any difference between kinds. Treating laughter as a purely intellectual phenomenon, he has only one answer to all problems. What is the essence of irony? "Something mechanical encrusted on the living." What is the essence of wit? "Something mechanical encrusted on the living." What is the essence of mirth, or of humor, or of satire, or of pleasantry, or of jest? Always the same answer: "Something mechanical encrusted on the living." Finally the answer itself tends to become somewhat mechanical and meaningless.

If all these shades and kinds of laughter reduce to the same intellectual formula, what is the meaning of the shades and distinctions made by common sense? The solution of the difficulty is simple: unless we recognize the emotional aspect of laughter which

unites with other feelings in such a way as to give meaning to the various kinds of laughter, we cannot account for the data of common sense and experience. Bergson has not found a common element in comic situations; he has rather reduced all shades of laughter, by divorcing them from the emotions, into an empty intellectual generalization.

Let us now consider whether or not this intellectual generalization is itself adequate as a common property of all comic situations. Does the expression "something mechanical encrusted on the living" validly get beyond the bare notion of incongruity? To say that this is the ultimate form of the comic seems patently untrue. Real and comic incongruities can and do exist between other elements. Let us take the realistic and the romantic, for example, and recall the hundred examples of a romantic illusion, shattered with comic effect by the intrusion of something hard, tangible, and realistic. Or take the eternal and the temporal—the amusing devils and angels who forget their eternal character and act like temporal beings. Where, we may ask, is the mechanical element in the play upon the letter and the spirit of the metaphor, in the intrusion of the physical upon the spiritual or moral, in the little effect that follows the big cause?

Of course, we may say that all these incongruities are *similar* to that between the mechanical and the living; by a very apt analogy, in a metaphorical way of speaking, they do suggest the automaton and the living being. But no philosophical theory can be ultimately established by an analogy, however apt, nor by a figure of speech, however convincing. We must say then that the opposition and incongruity between the mechanical and the living, although it applies to a large class of comic situations, is by no means the highest genus including all classes. To other classes, it applies only by analogy, only as a figure of speech, and its plausibility as a figure of speech is probably attributable only to the great interest of our own age in mechanical things. Another age might find this plausible analogy ridiculous.

The criticism of Bergson's last major point—the thesis that laughter is "above all a corrective", "intended to humiliate", a "method whereby society avenges itself for the liberties taken with it"—follows quite naturally and necessarily from the criticism of the first point, the assumption that there is one only general

kind of laughter. It is true, doubtless, that the objects of derisive and ironic laughter are intended to feel rebuked. But this desire to correct and punish springs not so much from the comic elements themselves as from the fundamental aversion we feel toward the object whose inharmonious elements are the subject of laughter. The kind of laughter which seeks to reprove or condemn is not laughter in general, but laughter with a purpose, with an underlying current in another feeling. Far from being out of place in society, the objects of pure comedy are among the most valuable assets of a normal community. Only a faulty intellectual analysis, arguing *after the fact* of laughing, could confuse the consequences of a particular kind or kinds of laughter with the essence of laughter itself.

IV.

Such are the attempts to take the Comic Spirit seriously, the results of analysis in the realms of laughter! If it is true that Bergson's principles cannot withstand criticism, what remains? Perhaps only the moral that analysis in many of its fields of endeavor consists mainly in retracing its own false steps. Certainly we leave the realm of laughter much as we found it, without necessary relation to social purpose or intellectual improvement. We have only undone false work, only diverted the stream of pure comedy from the skilfully laid pipes of social improvement to its own free and proper channel. Worse: in viewing a simple principle of incongruity emerging from a mass of tortuous reasoning and "high astounding" phrases (a typical little effect from a big cause), we begin to suspect that the Comic Spirit remains triumphant over philosophy. Yet reason has its justification; and that which can at one and the same time point an intellectual moral for philosophers and a jest for comedians is not without value.

by Robert Lathrop Sharp

OBSERVATIONS ON METAPHYSICAL IMAGERY

THE far-fetched figure is probably the outstanding characteristic of metaphysical imagery. In these few pages I should like to attempt some explanation of it in terms of the already highly developed poetic idiom which the metaphysicals inherited. Donne and his followers apparently tried to force imagery to do more work than it had previously, to raise the voltage of its suggestive power. No single formula covers all examples, but the reader has noticed that metaphysical figures are often condensed to a degree, hard-packed with intellect, or that they fly off beyond the usual comfortable periphery of poetic images, as though thrown off by the centrifugal force of an imagination which has, somehow, got out of control. Whether we relate it to dialects, to analytical subtlety, or to overzealous virtuosity, some sort of violence is apparent in the matter of metaphor. Yet an adequate explanation is not to be found here; the term *violence* does not allow us to appreciate the poetic process underlying metaphysical poetry. Likewise we must not look to the presence of conceits in the native or foreign literature that influenced the metaphysicals; nor to the change, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in the conception of wit, for such a change, of course, was a result rather than a cause of the heightened imagery. Granted that these considerations help us to understand the poetry of the metaphysicals; we need more. I would stress the organic growth of figurative language and the capacity of poets to adjust their imaginations to the resultant new levels of the poetic idiom.

That is, did the metaphysicals go further in the direction of condensing, heightening, or infusing their metaphors with new suggestions than the organic growth of their medium warranted? We must consider the accretions of suggestion which the images of poetry had accumulated by the time of Donne. The modern reader

approaches Elizabethan literature expecting imaginative richness and luxurious fullness of metaphor. He has been taught to do so: for him it is a literary and even antiquarian expectancy, acquired with the study of past poetry. But if his associates should speak or write in the conceited Elizabethan idiom, should seriously adopt it as the means of communication, he would need to adjust his imagination anew. Chiefly he would need to accelerate it. By virtue of their literary birthright the metaphysicals started on this speedier level.

Donne and Lord Herbert, Crashaw and Cowley were as aware as Shakespeare that wit conflicted with feeling:

Conceit and grief an eager combat fight,
What wit sets down is blotted straight with will;
This is too curious-good, this blunt and ill . . .
(*The Rape of Lucrece*, 11. 1298-1230)

It was their scorn of what was blunt and ill that led them to sharpen their wit purposely. Yet it may be remarked that they would not have done so if the result had fallen on their ears as it falls on ours. Wordsworth's observation that the "exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations" may help us to remember that the delights of poetry for Donne and the metaphysicals were not wholly what they are for us. We balk at many of the similes in such poems as Crashaw's "Mary Magdalene" and suspect that Cleveland and Christopher Harvey were inclined to parody. But among the metaphysicals themselves we have no precedent for such distrust. It should be obvious that especially their elegies and religious verses were written with the soberest intentions. To say that their taste was different begs the question and leads to a hundred subtle reasons for the formation of likes and dislikes. But something helpful in the consideration of metaphysical taste is found in the necessity that forced these poets to write after the Elizabethans and consequently, unless they wanted to continue the Elizabethan idiom unchanged, to revitalize their means of communication.

If the metaphysicals had chosen deliberately to restrain their imagination, to avoid all extravagance, they could easily have restricted their idiom. They could have taken the road indicated by Sir John Beaumont:

same general order as Pope's. Dryden's early work shows him unworthy of what was best in his metaphysical heritage; his imagination was fettered to the world of reality. Much may be read into Joseph Warton's distinction between the two types of imagination; and though Warton was thinking of Pope and the great three of the romantic revival, Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton, I here would substitute Dryden's name for Pope's and make a similar distinction between Dryden and Donne or between the metaphysicals and the neo-classicists. The metaphysicals did not possess so comprehensive nor so powerful imaginations as Shakespeare or Milton, but they were inventive, they did not fear to violate common sense, and at the most unexpected moments they reveal imaginations delicately suited to the requirements of poetry. They were both articulate and sensitive.

Of course Warton would not have approved of the metaphysicals; like other men of his time he would have been unable to overcome his distaste for the conceit sufficiently to appreciate the imaginative energy behind it. However, I think it is fair to borrow his distinction for my own use. Modern criticism is beginning to evaluate justly the effort of the metaphysicals, and once this effort is completely understood the conceit will lose the odium it has received since the days of Dryden.

II.

In their triumph the Elizabethans exhausted the language of poetry. For some reason, still unexplained, it was natural for them to think in metaphors, or, if *think* is inept, to transform the consciousness of experience into metaphors. As far as the reader is concerned, this process was not separated from that consciousness; that is, it was not an intellectual effort divorced from the immediate apprehension. Their imagery seems spontaneous; yet we know that a large part of it represents a deliberate avoidance of simplicity. They labored over form as much as later poets—Jonson said that he first wrote his poems in prose—but the language of poetry was not something which they had to search for. The "happy combinations of words which distinguish poetry from prose", to use a phrase of Dr. Johnson's, did not bother the Elizabethans as they did Dryden, who thought that they could be found

in the search; they presented no problem to a generation of poets who instinctively—for that is the best word—spoke poetry instead of prose. But just as poetry gains over prose by the more numerous ways in which it communicates: by its use of connotation, by the physical appeal of harmony, by the width and ambiguity allowed it, so does its language become more exhausted than that of prose and necessarily demand fresh shapes and colors, fresh degrees of suggestion and metaphor. The poetry which delights and stimulates one generation is worn and sapless for the next. The same harmony ceases to excite; the same metaphors cease to conjure. The language of poetry loses its zest because the same figures, even the same kind of figures or figures the same degree beyond prosaic statement, no longer stimulate. They lose their capacity for surprising the reader into a new awareness of life. Prose is always valuable for its irreducible minimum of meaning. Often the very meaning of poetry is dependent on poetry's ability to neglect meaning, to play with associations, to suggest by new symbols instead of stating. When these associations and symbols become staled by custom and no longer kindle the imagination, one generation of poets comes to an end.

The difficulty faced by the metaphysicals was that Elizabethan imagery, already completely flowered, was as far beyond prose as poetry usually goes: with the imagination of such as Marlowe and Shakespeare behind them the figures were keyed taut and resonant. Slight alterations turn even the most magnificent speeches of Elizabethan drama into burlesque. Petrarchan imagery, conceited to an almost dangerous degree, ran its high-flying course in sonnets for over a half century. By 1603 the boldest of metaphors were accepted as a matter of course. But the distance from the object spoken of and the metaphor or simile describing it was not so lengthy but that it was traversible without hesitation; or, as we say, without intellectual effort. The naturalness of the figures was not often called into question. Classical precedent, the precedent of all poetry, tolerated Elizabethan imagery.

John Donne might have chosen to pule in Petrarchan sonnets, like Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, and the rest, for he wrote much of his poetry when the fashion of Petrarchizing was at its height. But his imagination demanded more original expression; he could not find a satisfactory medium in the existing combinations of

words. Forging combinations for himself, however, meant statements either higher or lower than those already existent. Had he been neo-classically minded, he would have retrenched his imagination to fit a lower, less figurative level of expression. But he was daring, iconoclastic, and witty. His unique combination of passion and intellectual subtlety, which is the chief fact about Donne, would have been inadequately served by unfigurative language. At the same time Donne did not possess a poetic imagination in the Elizabethan sense: he did not care at all for the "beauties" of nature, and he thought the picturesqueness of the poetry of his contemporaries both false and superficial. He had to go above the Elizabethan level or not write poetry at all. Consequently his metaphors are two steps removed from the plain statement of prose; they require a double instead of a single mental jump. To few readers is a double jump of this kind natural. It has not been necessitated by enough poetry for us to regard it without question, to have the expectation of it in the back of our minds when we pick up a volume of poetry. We do expect metaphors, even conceits, of the Shakspearean kind; we recognize them as poetry because most of the poetry which has formed our taste conforms roughly to that kind.

The question of what is "natural" in figurative language is practically all that is at the root of the distaste of most people for metaphysical poetry. Our response to the occasionally figurative language of conversation is enlightening. The metaphors which have passed into every-day language are used without special thought. There is no effort to use a metaphor in "his eyes sparkled" nor, in most instances, consciousness that a metaphor has been used. It is but a short step to "his eyes blazed", the metaphor being more apparent yet acceptable. We cannot go much further in ordinary conversation without surprising our listeners. They would laugh if we should say "his eyes crackled" or even if, turning the first phrase around, we should say "sparks flew from his eyes". But logically speaking, a spark is a spark no matter how it is expressed. So also, logically speaking, eyes wet with tears cannot blaze, eyes filled with arrows of scorn, would blaze more brightly, eyes moistened with pity would smolder and smoke. Conceits similar to these occur in metaphysical poetry, and the modern reader, see-

ing logic as their only justification, calls them the result of degenerate or unpoetic taste.

But it was by no such logical process as this that the metaphysicals arrived at their figures. Because the poetic idiom of the Elizabethans was already a welter of metaphors, with countless variations of the same notion, the poetic necessity of being new and different led the metaphysicals to sensitize their perceptions. Their figures were the result not of cool logic but, like all poetry, of the poetic process. Whereas the Elizabethans began with an idiom on a lower figurative level the metaphysicals began with the figures of a Shakespeare. They were no more conscious of intellectual effort when they put to a new use the figures which they inherited than were the Elizabethans when they made their own language into metaphors.

Figures basically the same may be traced through Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Caroline verse. As they appear in Shakespeare or the Spenserians we are predisposed to call them natural. The genius of the metaphysicals wove its threads differently, attaining results we call happy or unhappy according to the connotation, fitness, and effectiveness of the new patterns. But it is striking that metaphysical successes and failures are about the same distance from the Elizabethan metaphor: they represent expansion, contraction, analysis, or some other progressive development.

For instance, to continue with figures about eyes, variations of the three separate notions of eyes as fountains, as stars, as arrows are frequent. The imaginative evolution from Marlowe to Crashaw is evident. In *Hero and Leander* eyes are "two tralucen cisterns"; and Shakespeare, possibly influenced by Marlowe's poem, which was registered before his own, uses the phrase "coral cisterns" in *The Rape of Lucrece* (l. 1234). In the same poem Shakespeare refers to tears as a "salt-wav'd ocean" (l. 1231). The modern reader calls these conceits and compares them with the seemingly more natural lines of Drayton ("Amour 9", *Sonnets*, 1594):

Beauty sometime, in all her glory crowned,
Passing by that cleere fountain of thine eye . . .

But it was Crashaw who focussed his imagination on eyes ("Saint Mary Magdalene"):

He's followed by two faithful fountains;
Two walking baths; two weeping motions;
Portable, & compendious oceans.

and achieved with the abstract "weeping motions" a power of suggestion far beyond any of the Elizabethans. Of course these conceits must not be visualized. Such an attempt would be harmful to Marlowe's and Shakespeare's phrases and fatal to Crashaw's. One wonders if it isn't a slipshod habit of visualizing all imagery that interferes with the proper appreciation of much metaphysical poetry. Our reading habits cannot be the same for all kinds of poetry.

In *Astrophel and Stella* (xxvi) Sidney spoke of the "two stars in Stella's face" and built a very astrological sonnet upon the conceit. For Shakespeare eyes were "mortal stars" (*Rape of Lucrece* II. 12-14):

Which triumph'd in that sky of his delight
Where mortal stars, as bright as heaven's beauties,
With pure aspects did him peculiar duties.

William Browne (*Brit. Past.* II, Song 2, 1.627) has:

His eyes were fixed

[rather fixed stars], a line showing some hesitation and less imaginative energy than his later, more complicated use of the same image (III, Song 2, II. 265-267):

Such were fair Psyche's lillied beds of love,
Or rather two new worlds where men would fain
Discover wonder by her stars above . . .

It was reserved for the metaphysicals to make the most, either in beauty or ingenuity of this conceit. One of Lord Herbert's most famous stanzas ("An Ode Upon a Question Moved—"):

This said, in her up-lifted face
Her eyes which did that beauty crown,
Were like two starres, that having faine down,
Look up again to find their place;

unfolds its heightened image slowly and deliberately, in this respect contrasting with the rapid intellectual movement of a passage in Donne's "Ecclogye":

Then from those wombs of starres, the Brides bright eyes,
At every glance, a constellation flies,
And sows the Court with starres

Sir Francis Kynaston's ("To Cynthia. On Concealment of her Beauty"):

Do not conceal thy radiant eyes,
The star-light of serenest skies,

is more delicate and less involved than either of the two immediately above. It shows how easily and gracefully the metaphysicals could use their idiom when they care to be trifling and melodious. Yet it is on a higher figurative level than Shakespeare's lines, which it most resembles, for the two-fold suggestion of sky, stars, stars, has become the three-fold suggestion of eyes, stars, sky.

Cowley's use of the common Elizabethan figure of arrows in eyes is an example of the double jump. Sidney had written (Sonnet xvii):

Of Stella's brows made him two better bows,
And in her eyes of arrows infinite.

and (Sonnet xcix):

To lay his then mark-wanting shafts of sight,
Clos'd with their quivers, in Sleep's armoury . . .

Drayton had added a comparison ("Amour 26," *Sonnets*, 1594):

Hydes in those christall quivers of her eyes
More Arrowes, with hart-piercing mettel poynted,
Then there be starres at midnight in the skyes.

But Cowley, without expressing the intermediate stage, elliptically conceived of an eye, as an archer when he paraphrased from Anacreon ("The Account"):

For arms at *Crete* each *Face* does bear,
And every *Eye's* an *Archer* there.

One of the prettiest and, if frequency is any criterion, best-liked images was that of the red and white of cheeks. Its basic, uncontrived use is typified in the work of the Scotch poet Alexander Montgomery ("In Prais of his Maistress"):

Hir comelie cheeks of vive colour,
Of rid and vhyt ymixt,
Ar lyk the sanguene jonet flour
Into the lillie fixt.

Browne does not advance it far (III, Song 2, l. 91):

Those cheeks of red and white, that living flow'r.

Sidney is definitely conceited (Sonnet xiii):

... her face he makes his shield,
Where roses gules are born in silver field.

Shakespeare changes the metaphor (*Rape of Lucrece* 1. 71):

Their silent war of lilies and of roses,

and uses it later, with some elaboration, in *Coriolanus* (II, i):

... our veil'd dames
Commit the war of white and damask in
Their nicely-gawded cheeks to the wanton spoil
Of Phoebus' burning kisses ...

The richness of this is sacrificed by Cleveland to a keen power of observing and comparing ("Upon Phillis—"):

... he that for their colour seeks
May find it vaulting in her cheeks,
Where roses mix—no civil war
Between her York and Lancaster.

Vaulting is excellent; and is it not true that to a seventeenth-century reader the mention of York and Lancaster meant not ill-timed specificness but new overtones? There may be no question as to which passage is imaginative and which is witty. But I wonder if these are more than convenient terms for differentiating poetic faculties which were more nearly allied than we think. Cleveland, a very competent metaphysical, was merely more daring—and it was by daring that the metaphysicals achieved their successes.

At the beginning of Donne's "Of the Progresse of the Soule" the reader is confronted with a conceit:

Or as sometimes in a beheaded man,
Though at those two Red seas, which freely ranne,
One from the Trunke, another from the Head ...

Here the reader pauses, but would he do likewise if he should come upon Marlowe's (*Hero and Leander*):

And all this while the red-sea of her blood
Ebb'd with Leander ... ?

Donne's figure was popular. Chamberlayne and Philipott were two of the poets who borrowed it. Archbishop Laud used it in his last speech, spoken from the scaffold on January tenth, 1644; his significant application of it evokes the tragic overtone which is wanting, and yet may have been intended, in Donne's lines. It

is undoubtedly "wit", in the same sense that the poets used the word:

I am now going apace, as you see, toward the Red-sea, and my feet are now upon the very brinks of it; an Argument, I hope, that God is bringing me into the Land of Promise . . .

Another image in Chamberlayne's *Pharonnida* perhaps is connected with that of Donne. If blood is like water, or red water, that water is like blood may follow as a corollary. Put into metaphor this occurs in Chamberlayne's phrase: "the macrocosm's cold blood" (Bk. II, Canto v, l. 140).

Cleveland heightened the conceit of red and white in cheeks by referring to a specific war. Another instance of the same device is found in Benlowes's treatment of that simile in Ford's *Broken Heart* (V, ii) which makes blood sparkle "like a lusty wine new broacht"; in Benlowes's *Theophila* (Canto III, l. 2020) this becomes the specific metaphor:

War hath our lukewarm claret broach'd with spears . . .

The images that may be similarly traced are numerous. I would not emphasize their source; nor, indeed, can we always be sure of this: a large number of these metaphors come from a common storehouse, and whether the grains were first gathered by the Greek or Latin poets, by the Elizabethans, or by the Italian *concettists* is not my main concern. The metaphysicals were seldom content merely to repeat the Elizabethan idiom, and their variations, their attempts to make the old into the new to keep poetry alive, vigorous, and communicative seem to me one of the most interesting things about their poetry.

Both Donne and Crashaw were fond of speaking of spring as a cradle:

Spring-times were common cradles . . .

(Donne, *Anat. of W.* 1.385).

This conceit led Eldred Revett, a minor metaphysical who merits being better known than he is, to one of his most charming passages (*Poems*, 1657, 31):

Some way the field thence swells at ease
And lifts our sight up by degrees
To where the steep side dissie lies
Supinely fast in precipices
Till with the bank oppos'd it lie,
In a proportion'd Harmonie,
As Nature here did sit and sing
About the *cradle* of the spring.

A couplet by Crashaw which loses because of its pettiness is an expansion of the conceit ("An Elegy Upon—Mr. Stanninow"):

If Flora's darlings now awake from sleep,
And out of their green mantlets dare to peep . . .

The early variants of the excellent simile in King's "Exequy":

But heark! My Pulse like a soft Drum
Beats my approach, tells *Thee* I come;

are fewer than the obvious imitations, such as Eldred Revett's (*Poems*, 21):

My pulse a Minute-clock, beat no Alarms,
That my congealed blood to action warms,

or Chamberlayne's (Bk. III, iii, 11.475-476):

Yet at life's garrisons his pulses beat
In hot alarums, till, to a soft retreat . . .

These last are too matter of fact to be effective; they cannot compete with the couplet of King, whose artistry is apparent at once in the suggestion, gentle and diffused, of sensitivity and hushed, even mystical, expectancy. Yet in regard to imaginative effort the lines of both Revett and Chamberlayne are as far as King's beyond this comparatively simple statement of Drayton ("Sonnet 9," *Sonnets*, 1599):

Straitwayes my pulse playes lively in my vaines . . .

The conceit of arms as circles and later, with the learned bias of astronomy, as spheres, is rich in examples. Explored chronologically these show the metaphysical tendency to heap up earlier conceptions and to express rapidly the essence of what earlier would have been several metaphors. A passage in *Titus Andronicus* (II, iv) shows the Elizabethan stage:

. . . made thy body bare
Of her two branches, those sweet ornaments
Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in . . .

Marlowe is rather definitely conceited (*Hero and Leander*):

Then laid he forth his late-enriched arms
In whose white circle Love writ all his charms,
And made his characters sweet Hero's limbs . . .

By the time of *Pharonida*, 1659, this has passed into the idiom

known to all poets; Chamberlayne makes use of it in passing but does not stress it (II, v. 11. 297-298):

... he in his arms
Circles his saint;

and again (III, iv, 11.6, 7):

Love's amorous wreaths, Janusa's arms, within
Whose ivory circles he had slept.

But aided by the popularity of the conceit of the compasses, which was used by most of Donne's followers, Cleveland developed a condensed and highly metaphorical passage, a fusion of several notions: the sphere of arms, cosmological spheres, geographical circles, and the instrument that makes circles ("To the State of Love"):

I now impale her in mine arms;
(Love's compasses confining you,
Good angels, to a circle too.)
Is not the universe strait-laced
When I can clasp it in the waist?
My amorous folds about thee hurled,
With Drake I girdle in the world;
I hoop the firmament, and make
This, my embrace, the zodiac.

Donne's ("An Epithalamion—," 11.81-82):

He comes, and passes through Spheare after Spheare,
First her sheetes, then her Arms, then any where.

is intensive but much less full of suggestion.

I do not think that the necessity of packing and condensing which the metaphysicals yielded to was harmful in itself. It did make poetry more intellectual, though again one may say that the metaphysicals were nursed on figurative language; they adjusted themselves to their burden early and doubtless were not unduly conscious of it. If we appreciate their poetic heritage we shall be the less likely to misunderstand their own conceits and their own attitude toward the linguistic level on which they worked.

It is not easy to express our reasons for liking some conceits and disliking others. Nor do I think that we can formulate rules for measuring the good and the bad—for certainly both kinds exist. Often we discern the fitness of the connotation, the charm of a new combination alive with imagination, or the emphasis and

color which reawaken our responses. But we cannot say dogmatically that concentration is bad, that witty metaphors are bad, or that the intellectual readiness required to bridge elliptical imagery is a handicap. This passage of King's is extremely concentrated ("The Double Rock"):

Therefore by thinking on thy hardness, I
Will petrify;
And so within our double Quarryes Wombe,
Dig our Loves Tombe.

Yet it has much more poetry in it than the comparable conceit in "A Dialogue" (perhaps by the Earl of Pembroke and Sir Benjamin Rudyard):

I'll never dig in Quarry of an heart to have no part . . .

These lines of Marvell's are the very essence of wit ("Upon Appleton House"):

Whose columns should so high be raised,
To arch the brows which on them gazed;

yet the success of that sudden linking of the object and the gazer will not, I think, be questioned. Finally, condensation and ellipsis are the very *raison d'être* of the extremely clever and poetic:

Mystical grammar of amorous glances;
Feeling of pulses, the physic of love;
Rhetorical courtings and musical dances;
Numbering of kisses arithmetic prove;
Eyes like astronomy;
Straight-limbed geometry;
In her art's ingeny
Our wits were sharp and keen.

(Cleveland, "Mark Antony").

These observations concerning imagery may be paralleled with others concerning the ideas of whole poems, the unifying intellectual threads. The metaphysicals were elliptical in the intellectual as well as the figurative structure of their verse because they could afford to be: they could assume that their readers were acquainted with the ideas of Elizabethan poetry. The common Elizabethan notion that sleep is the counterpart of death, a notion expanded and reiterated in countless sonnets, could be used by Donne in his mortuary verse with swift effect, as when he says

that a condemned man ("Obsequies to the Lord Harrington—", 1.24):

Doth practice dying by a little sleepe . . .

The same poet's "Legacie", which seems far-fetched to us, is really only a poem that carries further the conceit, well known to the Elizabethans, expressed in Sidney's song in the *Arcadia*:

My true Love hathe my harte, and I have his . . .

No other metaphysical possessed Donne's genius, but they all agreed with Donne that a faster, more efficient rhetoric should be used and that the rhetoric merely of periphrasis and adornment was exhausted. If they were led into obscurity and roughness, these faults, like the inevitable extravagance, became apparent only to the next generation of poets, the neo-classicists.

by L. Robert Lind

LIMBO

*tendebantque manus ripae
ulterioris amore.*—AENEID VI, 314.

Rarely, in some swift tremor of the mind,
Limned in a gesture, choked laugh, broken word,
In lift of lid, or shadow, men may find
New meaning clear they never saw nor heard.
So have they found, in that one moment's span,
Another world where they had thought was none;
And in the face he knew so well, a man
Has seen love's task of learning scarce begun.

Eternity is not so wide as this
Vast gulf we cannot bridge, from soul to soul;
The flesh turns back before the still abyss,
The brain despairs; and, lonely as the Pole,
Two mortals stand and question till they die,
Knowing that even Death may not reply.

by M. L. S. Loring

T. S. ELIOT ON MATTHEW ARNOLD

MATTHEW ARNOLD found generalization easy: while Mr. T. S. Eliot speaks of the difficulty of making competent generalizations frequently enough to attract attention. In the essay on the metaphysical poets, he speaks of the difficulty of assimilating the various civilizations of our day in comparison to the less complex civilization of the XVII century; in "Thoughts After Lambeth",¹ he speaks of the need for dogma, dogma which will not necessarily attempt to comprehend all factors, since Mr. Eliot sees inconsistencies in life itself that can find no integral part in dogma. Mr. Eliot sees a great deal, and finds little cohesive order in his disparate minutiae; Matthew Arnold is not a master of detail, nor erudite, but he exercised sufficient judgment on what he did know to develop standards immediately applicable and socially important to the life of his time.

Mr. Eliot's attitude to Arnold is a paradox; while Mr. Eliot assumes the same general position as Arnold in criticism, he will own no connection with him, and even attacks him in terms which imply profound disagreement. And yet one feels that they are very like.

Mr. Eliot's assertion that he is to be considered a "companion" rather than a "disciple" of Arnold's is a nice distinction, and indicates that he recognizes the anomaly of his position. In his essay "Arnold and Pater", or, as it was named when it originally appeared in *The Eighteen-Eighties*, "The Place of Pater", Mr. Eliot states that Arnold's standards can no longer be taken seriously,—and proceeds directly to quite a serious attack on them. He is somewhat handicapped by the fact that this field was thoroughly exhausted some time ago; critics have more recently been devoting their efforts to salvaging the re-workable bits of Arnold's doctrines, estimating his influence, and investigating his

¹T. S. Eliot—*Selected Essays*.

—T. S. Eliot—*The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism*.

sources. The essay as an attack on Arnold is rather weak, both because it is late in the day, and because Mr. Eliot has no real point to bring out,—always excepting his own relation to Arnold, which is interesting. Mr. Eliot's points do not require serious refuting either; indeed the first, that Arnold's generalizations are particular and not universal truths, was forestalled by Arnold himself, when he announced, still some time ago, that his doctrines were applicable only to what he called a "modern age", by which he meant ages of such character as that of Pericles, and the Victorian age. Mr. Eliot girds at the vagueness and haziness of the Culture which Arnold presents: the vagueness of definition he holds directly responsible for Pater's æstheticism, which is in its turn held responsible for some untidy lives. When this point is examined a little more seriously, perhaps, than it was made, we have Mr. Eliot adopting Arnold's social theory of art: for there can be no critical objection to untidy lives, nor to Pater's leading to them, nor even to Arnold's leading to Pater's æstheticism. The whole point resolves into a slap that Mr. Eliot gives Arnold in passing, and no serious inference can be drawn from it. One might imagine them contemporary and rival critics.

In *The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism* published in 1934, Mr. Eliot still brings no real objection to Arnold's position. The whole book is more academic in tone than *Selected Essays*, as is natural, since they were delivered as a course of lectures in 1932-1933, when he was Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry in Harvard University, and they show a much more balanced sense of Arnold's critical importance. I do not think Mr. Eliot means to retract anything said in "Arnold and Pater" for on page 113 of *The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism*, he refers us back to the earlier essay for an elucidation of his opinion of Arnold's religious attitude. I quote the following from the lecture on Arnold to demonstrate the difference in tone! "He is the poet and critic of a period of false stability. All his writing in the kind of *Literature and Dogma* seems to me a valiant attempt to dodge the issue, to mediate between Newman and Huxley; but his poetry, the best of it, is too honest to employ any but his genuine feelings of unrest, loneliness, and dissatisfaction."

Mr. Eliot's critical purpose accords with Arnold's very nicely: in "The Study of Poetry" Arnold says that his purpose is to enable

us to gain "a clearer sense and deeper enjoyment of what is truly excellent." This is not the whole of Arnold's position; a more complete statement of his attitude appears in Mr. Eliot's *Function of Criticism*; and there we find Mr. Eliot's critical purpose merely a refining of Arnold's. "I do not deny that art may be affirmed to serve ends beyond itself; but art is not required to be aware of these ends, and indeed performs its function, whatever that may be, according to various theories of value, much better by indifference to them. Criticism, on the other hand, must always profess an end in view, which, roughly speaking, appears to be an elucidation of works of art, and the correction of taste." The only qualification of Arnold's position which Mr. Eliot makes is that Arnold does not place sufficient emphasis on the presence and action of self-criticism in creation. And he would doubtless regard this aberration from Arnold's general classicist position as due to his political Whiggery, which must have insinuated too strong a belief in inspiration into his classicism. But in the main social purpose of criticism Arnold and Eliot agree; and what is surprising, considering Mr. Eliot's poems, in the social purpose of all art. Their conceptions of the place of poetry have a considerable but superficial difference, however; where Arnold attaches the weight of morals to poetry, Mr. Eliot considers it a "superior amusement". I say that the difference is considerable because of the apparent difference between morals and amusement; but in sober truth, it might happen that Arnold's definition of morals and Mr. Eliot's definition of amusement would have points of contact. I think it would be difficult to overestimate the fundamental seriousness of Mr. Eliot's mind; and following Jowett I am convinced of the fundamental levity of Arnold's mind. I would cite *God and the Bible*, *St. Paul and Protestantism*, and the Celtic lectures in support of a somewhat novel attitude: in undertaking such pieces of work Arnold did not seriously respect the responsibility of his critical reputation. It is not that Arnold permitted himself what might be called the charms and privileges of levity, whims, and waywardness; indeed his notion of an English Academy like the French Academy was based on his desire to discourage such qualities in English literature. Arnold's attempt to establish a group opinion, independent, and worthy to be referred to, would, I believe, be supported by Mr. Eliot. This

is evident from "William Blake" and "Dante". Blake's genius, as Mr. Eliot sees it, becomes crankiness, and is wasted in futilities because he relied on no standards outside himself; while Dante is freed to develop his genius by his very reliance on his religious and cultural background. It is not a general comment, but I have found it particularly interesting that Mr. Eliot supports Arnold in what has been regarded as one of his stronger prejudices, his dictum on Burns. It is in the chapter, "Matthew Arnold", in *The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism* that Mr. Eliot says: "In his essay on *The Study of Poetry* he has several paragraphs on Burns, and for an Englishman, and an Englishman of his time, Arnold understands Burns very well. Perhaps I have a partiality for small oppressive nationalities like the Scots that makes Arnold's patronizing manner irritate me; and certainly I suspect Arnold of helping to fix the wholly mistaken notion of Burns as a singular untutored English dialect poet instead of as a decadent representative of a great alien tradition." So that on the whole, Mr. Eliot's critical position is close enough to Arnold's to have made him uneasy. He feels that in spite of these demonstrable likenesses there is a difference in their general attitudes which renders agreement on particular points negligible: and this difference is to be found in their attitudes to critical generalization, or, in religion, to dogma.

Mr. Eliot has spoken of Matthew Arnold's attitude to religion in a tone which shows him unmistakably opposed, not only to Arnold's conclusions, but what is more important here, to his method of reaching them. In "Arnold and Pater" he says: "The degradation of philosophy and religion, skilfully initiated by Arnold, is competently continued by Pater." And later: "Matthew Arnold's religion is the more confused, because he conceals, under the smoke of strong and irrational prejudice, just the same, or no better, Stoicism and Cyrenaicism of the amateur classical scholar." Now these are very hard words. Their very violence somewhat discredits them: because it indicates a very real difference, not of opinion, but of point of view. I would not say that Mr. Eliot does not understand Arnold's position: but certainly, in summarizing that position, Mr. Eliot misrepresents him. The aim of Matthew Arnold's religious writings, says Mr. Eliot, "is to affirm that the emotions of Christianity can and must be

preserved without the belief." That reduces Arnold's religious views to absurdity: but if we substitute for "emotions of Christianity", "impulse to moral action", as I think we may, the position is surely tenable. Mr. Eliot does not get beyond the fact of a Christian morality connected with a Christian church; Arnold is dealing with the general result of moral action produced by some strong motive, taste, or organization. Arnold supported a state church as a state recognition of voluntary morality: but since he believed that the influence of the church was gradually weakening, he bent his efforts to bolstering up the influence of the church for moral suasion, by an alliance with literature. And he pointed out the many advantages which would accrue from the re-combination. The church is subordinate to literature this time; both are sublimated into Culture, which is the intellectual expression of a civilized state. Of course, in such a comprehensive theory each step is not wholly justified; there are many hiatuses in the argument, and both religion and literature find themselves painfully lopped; but a plausible, utilitarian, and acceptable generalization is built up. And I think it worth pointing out that Arnold was justified in his course by a considerable measure of success. Mr. Eliot's recent tendency is to make literature more the hand-maid of religion; this is shown in the essays, "William Blake" (1920), "Dante", (1929), "Thoughts After Lambeth", (1931), and in the poems, *Ash-Wednesday*, and "Journey of the Magi". The fact that Arnold preferred literature, and Mr. Eliot religion, is important, but does not explain their fundamental opposition. That lies in their opinion of the proper method of developing fact into generalization, or dogma.

Mr. Eliot considers that there are two attitudes which may be taken to dogma, and he distinguishes between them in this extract from "Thoughts After Lambeth", "To put it frankly, but I hope not offensively, the Roman view in general seems to me to be that a principle must be affirmed without exception; and that thereafter exceptions can be dealt with without modifying the principle. The view natural to the English mind, I believe, is rather that a principle must be framed in such a way as to include all allowable exceptions." In the essay further on, Mr. Eliot gives it as his opinion that there are inconsistencies in life itself that can find no integral part in dogma. I should judge that Mr. Eliot is Anglo-

Catholic, and might (although this is very delicate going) have some leaning to the Roman method. Mr. Eliot himself has made it easy to identify for him, at least, Catholicism in religion and Classicism in literature, when in *The Function of Criticism* he quotes Mr. Murry as follows, "Mr. Murry makes his issue perfectly clear. 'Catholicism', he says, 'stands for the principle of unquestioned spiritual authority outside the individual; that is also the principle of Classicism in literature.' Within the orbits within which Mr. Murry's discussion moves, this seems to me an unimpeachable definition, . . ." Since we have Mr. Eliot's word for it that he adopts the principles of Classicism, and since it is fairly clear that he is in sympathy with Catholicism, we can identify Mr. Eliot with the Roman method of arriving at dogma; that is, the arbitrary imposition of a dogma on the facts, in place of the building up of a dogma from the facts. I regard that identification as the real reason that Mr. Eliot dislikes being lumped with Arnold. I further consider that this attitude to dogma is at the root of much that is looked upon as perverse, and that it is decidedly puzzling in Mr. Eliot's criticism. And I hold it responsible for the adoption of his poetic technique.

To understand how this attitude to dogma is manifested in Mr. Eliot's poetry, we must first analyse carefully the theory underlying the methods of all Symbolist poets. And Mr. Eliot, although as a critic he professes Classicism, must still be ranked as a Symbolist poet. Mr. Paul Elmer More, in his review of *Selected Essays* in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, November 12th, 1932, points out the cleft which exists between Mr. Eliot's critical formulae of Classicism, Anglicanism, and Royalism, and his poetry. He informs us that Mr. Eliot has no intention of changing his poetic method, and regards *Ash-Wednesday*, and *Sweeney Agonistes* as a development from such earlier things as *The Waste Land*. It is not known generally how closely Mr. Eliot was connected with the Symbolists in France, but in England, and later, he was publicly associated with Mr. Ezra Pound; and M. René Taupin in his study, *L'influence du symbolisme français sur la poésie américaine (de 1910 à 1920)*, has shown the frequent resemblance of Mr. Eliot's poetry to that of Laforgue, Corbière, and Gautier. The identification with these Romantic artists seems to weaken Mr. Eliot's critical Classicist position. For Classicism is antagonistic

to Symbolism, and while Anglicanism and Royalism make use of Symbolism, it is for a reason different from the Romantic artist's. There the symbol represents profound truth to minds incapable of grasping the truth in a more abstract form. In French poetry the symbol is more subtly used: it represents a truth or emotion, perceived unconsciously, but not consciously realized, although consciously appreciated. That is, a mind may perceive a truth, appreciate its importance, and yet find itself, from the peculiar nature of the perception unable to formulate it and present it in the usual forms. The theory of poetry to which Mr. Eliot subscribes holds that there are some things in the mind which are incommunicable. It is interesting to contrast to this a passage in *Lancelot Andrewes* which refers to Donne's sermons. "We may cavil at the word incommunicable, and pause to ask whether the incommunicable is not often the vague and unformed . . ." This is backed up by a general statement in *The Function of Criticism*, "And, as our instincts of tidiness imperatively command us not to leave to the haphazard of unconsciousness what we can attempt to do consciously, we are forced to conclude that what happens unconsciously we could bring about, and form into a purpose if we made a conscious attempt." The first quotation is a direct contradiction of the whole poetic theory of Symbolism; it is a decisive and practical application of Classicism, in assuming that a manifold impression of the minutiae of thought and emotion can be worked up into a representative and clear presentation. Symbolism attempts no generalization, but offers a selection of one of the minutiae, to stand for the whole group. The symbol is distinct from each other part of the group, and is complete in itself; it represents the whole group arbitrarily and incompletely. In this sense it resembles the principles of Roman dogma discussed earlier. And the "sense of the past" which is—one might almost say symbolized—in Mr. Eliot's poems as quotations and echoes from past writers is characteristic again of the method of generalization which we have called Roman. The "sense of the past", or the poet's knowledge and appreciation of the past, is usually diffused through a poem; it will be perceived and appreciated only because it is his knowledge that has formed the poet's taste, and influenced his diction. Where a more specific recall of the past is necessary, by a turn of phrase, choice of word, or change of style,

the poet will evoke the desired impression in the informed reader. But what Mr. Eliot gives us in his poem is the exact quotation or bit of information which impressed the poet. The quotation is one particle in what must have been a mass of impression; it represents the mass arbitrarily and incompletely. In Roman dogma, the draw-backs of this arbitrariness are so well recognized that the fault, if it be one, has become a positive virtue in facilitating the fitting of the dogma to the particular case. And a tenderness for the particular case or fact is implied in this type of dogma or generalization. Consider Mr. Eliot's "highly developed sense of fact", which he believes so necessary in a critic. Our elementary training in science, now, gives us a high respect for fact in itself; and in Mr. Eliot this scientific respect for the fact has become an ethical feeling for its integrity. A fact may be twisted and turned, and lighted, and ranked, but never suppressed as irrelevant, nor even curtailed. But to build up even the soundest generalization, all but the essentials in the facts must be firmly and carefully discarded. Too tender a respect for a fact, although it may be true, and obvious, will be very unlikely to lead to sound and constructive generalization. And it seems to me that Mr. Eliot uses symbols, and his "sense of the past" simply because he does not generalize effectively. A work of art, a vase for instance, exists in the clay and in the application of the artist's mind to that clay; it is built up from the clay, and molded to his mind. The element is homogeneous, and the workman seeks to produce a single effect by his art. The method by which Mr. Eliot uses symbols and the "sense of the past" rather resembles those vases that one sees in the country, made up of bits of variously patterned china embedded in a hardened cement. The article is heterogeneous; the impression is particularized. The artist has not generalized his particular impressions of what is pretty into an artistic whole, but has carried them piecemeal to his work of art. Mr. Eliot has a "very highly developed sense of fact". His aperçus are true, and productive, his analyses illuminating; but are his generalizations of Classicism and Anglicanism constructed upon them? In his religious attitude it appeared to me that Mr. Eliot indicated that he did not believe dogma could be effectively generalized from isolated facts; may this not be the case in his literary attitude? That is, Mr. Eliot perceives fact acutely, analyzes its

tendency with truth and effect, and then imposes on this promising foundation an arbitrary dogma. That is the process he advocates in religious matters, this process underlies his poetic technique, and it explains why Royalism, Anglicanism, and Classicism are such unsatisfactory generalizations from Mr. Eliot's particular criticisms, and his poetry.

The complete and harmonious agreement between Matthew Arnold's critical ideas, and his poetry, would be quite remarkable, if it had been quite spontaneous. Considered as the work of Matthew Arnold himself, it is not less interesting. Since one of the strongest points of evidence that there is authenticity to Marguerite is that Arnold in subsequent editions of his poems, changed the titles and sequence of the poems connected with her in order to lessen any biographical significance, we may take it that there is something here worth going into. That there is a cleft between Matthew Arnold's early reputation and the seriousness of his poetry would be forgotten now except for a comment of his sister's, who was "struck and surprised" at the moral strength which she did not "expect to find in Matt; . . .". That there was a cleft between his poetic practice and his critical views is well known; his attitude to lyrics and his exclusion of "Empedocles" from the 1853 edition of his poems were for some time storm centres of the attacks made on Arnold. It is due to Arnold's own efforts, to his genius for smoothing down and tucking under, that more has not been made of this variance. Mr. Sherman believes that "Empedocles" is saturated with Arnold's own thoughts and feelings about life. This alone would make it valuable to us; and intrinsically it is a very fine poem. The whole affair is a striking instance of how much Arnold was prepared to sacrifice to a logical position, or his own generalization. And he did this not only because he wanted his ideas in a form in which they could easily and effectively applied, but because the tendency of his mind led to generalization; an interesting aspect of this is shown in Arnold's concern for the framework rather than the detail of composition. It is because the framework and tone of "Empedocles" are not poetically faultless that he omits it; he wanted, he said, like the Greeks, to regard the whole, not the parts. This emphasis on tone finds significant expression in Arnold's criticism: his touch-stone "for detecting the presence or absence of high poetic quality" is a

reliance on general impression as a basis of judgment, rather than on a series of particular decisions. Arnold does not appreciate to what extent any general impression must be based on these particular decisions; certainly he makes no provision for taking these underlying factors into account, and is culpable, at least, in encouraging facile generalization. While Mr. Eliot regards facile generalization as characteristic of a limited mind; in the "Dialogue on Dramatic Poetry" he says, "And the less you know and like, the easier to frame aesthetic laws." Arnold and Mr. Eliot are at opposite extremes here: Mr. Eliot will not venture to build from his pile of goodly stones because some do not fit in easily, others will not support weight, and still others could not be left intact, but must be cut for use; Matthew Arnold hews all stones to his purpose, and casts out "Empedocles". But for his end, which was not culture, but the propagation of culture, and was not literature, but the procuring of literature, he is, as I said, not only right, but justified by success.

An appreciation of tradition has yoked together two critics whose methods of working are fundamentally opposed in principle. Matthew Arnold found generalization easy and effective because he was satisfied to build on the religious and cultural background he possessed. He did not examine the foundation of his confidence, but set to work to erect his monumental structure. Strawberry Hill, built on such principles, tumbled dramatically into ruins: built for a day's fancy, it served that. Mr. Eliot realized the conflicting nature of his religious and cultural background: and he went to the extremes of individualism to appreciate the value of working on a sound basis of other men's conclusions. He appreciates, in "William Blake" and "Dante" what Arnold had preached to Clough, the necessity of leaving off "poking and patching and cobbling away at the *assiette* itself." Though they came to it along different ways, the same appreciation of tradition which encouraged Arnold to erect his Strawberry Hill has led Mr. Eliot to rent his house from the Anglicans, Classicists, and Royalists. But into this house he moves all his outlandish furniture of Symbolism.

by Cuthbert Wright

EPICURUS IN PERIGORD

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE. Edited by Marvin Lowenthal. Boston and New York. Houghton Mifflin Company. 1935. Pp. 394.

During the year 1580-81 a small, crop-haired, black eyed gentleman might have been seen mousing around in churches and museums, or quietly taking his pleasure in the open air cafés of Venice or Florence. Though attired in the discreet and decent black which the dreadful domination of Spain was then dictating to Western Europe, this man was evidently a French tourist. On his return to his native land the former Mayor of Bordeaux composed for publication his *Travel Journey in Italy* which, save for Stendhal's *Voyages*, is without doubt the most delightful volume of its type ever penned. It is remarkable, not merely for those qualities of humor and meditation typical of its author, but for presenting a most curious picture of peninsular life during the post-Renaissance and Counter-Reformation period. Montaigne possesses, above all things, the quality of being smilingly surprised by everything he sees, together with the tact of one who wishes to make no improper use of his astonishment. Unlike Rabelais he really sees, or endeavors to see, the Eternal City of Rome as one properly intoxicated by its alleged classic glories, but like Du Bellay he is perfectly, if not so poignantly, resigned to its decadence. In 1581, the Rome of Pope Gregory XIII, who was engaged in reforming everything, even the Calendar, was not too happy a place for a French humanist who had a little outlived his time.

Montaigne's luggage was held over by the inspectors of the Holy Office, and *His Little Hours of the Blessed Virgin* looked at askance by the reverend Dogberries because it had been printed at Paris, as were certain German books *against* the Protestants. On the eve of Christmas he reaches Rome and assists at the Pontifical Mass of the Nativity in the "mistress and mother" of churches, noting that the Gospel is chanted twice in Greek and

Latin, as it still is at Saint Peter's on great festivals, but that the Pope and his deacons-of-honor kept their heads covered and chatted together the while. The comment is highly characteristic of the French traveller, then and now. It is not that Montaigne is shocked by the indecorum in question; he is merely disconcerted by an unfamiliar detail. Prelates do *not* wear their mitres at Divine Service in France. During Christmas week he is received by the Holy Father in a rather casual and conventional manner, quite as if he had been an ordinary tourist. "It may be said," reports the traveller, "that the life and doings of this Pontiff call for no special remark, but that, on the while, his leaning is strongly toward the good." It is a sound historical criticism written on the spot. He sums up the Rome of the Counter-Reform correctly when he adds that there is less religious devotion there than in the better-ordered Catholic towns of France—the national touch once more.

But Montaigne, as everyone knows, was not very intensely concerned with religious problems and practices. What really stirred him was to visit the Vatican Library where he handled MSS. of his beloved Plutarch and Seneca, and noted a *Summa* in the hand of Thomas Aquinas who "wrote worse than himself", a true saying, for Montaigne's handwriting remains extremely legible. He saw also the Missal of Saint Gregory the Great, used by the Council of Trent as the criterion of its liturgical reforms, and Henry the Eighth's Golden Book against Luther, "written in good scholastic Latin", small wonder since most of it was Thomas More's. Thus life goes on for this alert and happy bookworm till the advent of Passion Week closes for him the taverns and museums, and sends him again to the Seven Churches.

We have dwelt so long upon this charming book, not merely because we really prefer it to the *Essais* recently edited with a brilliant preface by Mr. Lowenthal, but because it is, within the limits of the subject, more truly autobiographic. Montaigne was not only a considerable mystery and paradox himself, but he dearly loved to mystify and be paradoxical, sometimes in an almost Chestertonian manner, with due respect to his superiority of style. He has been called the first modern man of letters, the forerunner of Rousseau, and all the rest of it. Intensely modern he is, as we propose to indicate in a moment, but we take leave

to remark, at this point, that if Montaigne be the precursor of Rousseau it is only that he elected to write of himself, and that he scarcely measures up to his alleged spiritual godson in intimacy, in disconcerting candour. Modernity and . . . a certain caginess, a chronic evasion, are his outstanding qualities. We can think of no man of letters, ancient or modern, who can be so exasperatingly Protean. He can be classical, romantic, disingenuous, frank, orthodox, modernist, callous and pitiful, infinitely delicate and consummately crude, all in the same book, and sometimes in the same essay. Attempt who can to seize this Proteus, to capture this quicksilver, to crystalize this essence, to pluck out the heart from his mystery.

About the modernity of Montaigne there can hardly be any question if by that absurd word we mean a quality of reasoning, of common sense which we like to think is characteristic of our own time, particularly in the United States. The kinship of Montaigne,—living as he did in the wake of an international catastrophe, the French Religious Wars—with the so-called “lost generation” of the Twenties and Thirties, the Joyce, as distinguished from the Jazz Era, is so unmistakable that it is no wonder it has escaped notice. For example, in the twenty-first Essay—on Imagination—this official Catholic is “modern” enough to present a theory of auto-suggestion to explain certain medieval miracles, the stigmata of Francis of Assisi, for instance, The Essay on Old Age defers to our future Republic sufficiently to observe that “a man is developed so far as he is likely to be at twenty, and no one who has not given earnest of his powers at that age will ever give proof of them thereafter.” The Essay on Cruelty makes a bow to Dr. Freud, remarking that “Cowardice is the mother of cruelty, and this malevolent heartlessness is usually accompanied by an almost *feminine* weakness.”

II.

But, in the long run, it is not with Dr. Freud nor “the lost generation” that Montaigne has shown the most arresting similarity, but rather with one usually considered the very elixir of Modernity, an Englishman, a product of the World War and the Carthaginian Peace, a young man in whom scientific and æs-

thetic interests seem remarkably, if not absolutely, synthesized. Mr. Aldous Huxley has employed the fictional form as the vehicle for his ideas much as Montaigne employed the essay. Both have written travel books, and those of Mr. Huxley are unquestionably the best of their sort in English. Long passed is the time in which he was treated by the travelling salesmen of criticism as a mere "light" novelist, an entertainer, something like a transatlantic Carl Van Vechten. The austerity, the humanism, the revolt from sex and the cult of pleasure, of the capitalized Big Time; the incomparable note of exasperation with his era and environment, can be profitably studied on almost every page he has written from *Limbo and Other Stories* down through *Point Counterpoint* and *Do What You Will* to his late fantasy about a future Wellsian world. One can do no better, then, than to go direct to what seems the chief fountain of the Huxlian philosophy; one may go to Montaigne.

In Mr. Huxley's devastating *Point Counterpoint* there is the midnight scene in the Soho restaurant where Rampion, said to be a portrait of the late D. H. Lawrence, proclaims across the table his proud philosophy of mere humanity . . . "Every attempt at being something better than a man—the result's the same. You try to be more than human, and only succeed in making yourself less than human. Nobody asks us to be anything but men. A man mind you! Not an angel or a devil. A man, a creature on a tight-rope, walking delicately, equilibrated, with mind and consciousness and spirit at one end of the pole, and instinct at the other. Balanced. The only absolute he will ever know is the absolute of perfect balance. The absoluteness of perfect relativity. Which is nonsense, logically. You can chose which you like, logic or life. It's a matter of taste. Some people prefer being dead."

And Mr. Huxley's master, Montaigne, in his Essay on Presumption, seems to answer antiphonally across the gulf of three hundred and fifty years:

They are indeed to blame who would disunite our principal parts, soul and body, and keep them apart. They should, on the contrary, be coupled and joined together. There is nothing in us, during this our earthly exile, that is either purely corporeal, or purely spiritual; and we wrongfully tear a living man to pieces.

Nor is this all. The very image, the dominant symbol, on which Huxley has constructed his most notable novel to date, and the one which seems to express the quintessence of his philosophy, is borrowed from the same source. "A fugue," Montaigne says, "a counterpoint, has need of all its voices. In the counterpoint of life, each melody plays its separate part. The harmony closes full on the complete human being, on *Man*."

Montaigne in his last Essay (on Experience) has very nobly compared the good life to a harmony made up of apparently contrary things, of voices in different timbres. "Many people try to get outside themselves; *they attempt to be angels and only succeed in making themselves beasts*. A man who can truly and rightly enjoy his mixed existence is absolutely and almost divinely perfect, and the most beautiful lives are those that conform, in harmony and order, to the model of our common humanity."

III.

The *Essais* in general form a book without plan, careless of construction, born of the contemporary literary fashion of annotating with personal reflections well known aphorisms from the adulated classics. Montaigne quotes direct from the latter to a wearisome degree, but at the same time his annotations are infused with several original ideas and a highly flavored and personal style. The fundamental principle of his book is the Hellenic recommendation: Know Thyself, but since, according to his idea, the individual carries within him the dominant notes of his species, to paint oneself is to hold up the mirror to normal humanity. Montaigne has the tendency of evading everything that makes for trouble, a deep instinctive hatred of every sort of inhibition. ("I flee constraint, obligation, command.") He even mistrusts the affections, having known only one that was altogether perfect, his friendship for the dead La Boitié. Generally speaking, one may lend himself to others, but give only to oneself. He loves his children after a fashion, but only when they are sufficiently developed to arouse the half amused and detached affection he harbors for mankind. Though so resolutely Epicurean, he is as prepared for the worst, even for Death, as any Stoic. In fact he is over-occupied with the problem of mortality.

His scepticism has been highly exaggerated; rather it is what used to be called "Fideism" in the early years of the last century. In a world so replete with riddles and contradictions, he can be certain of nothing, and this tends to throw him into the everlasting arms of a supernatural faith that will supplement the deficiencies of his reason. It all resembles somewhat the "Will to Believe" of the late William James. This affirmation being conceded him, Montaigne avows that he will conform to the dominant religion of his native country on worse than pragmatic grounds. The student, engaged in pursuing this Proteus, may perhaps fancy that he has clasped him firmly at this point. What! Had France turned Huguenot, as she seemed to have a sporting chance of doing, would Montaigne have turned also? It seems not so, for again he eludes us in words which could be read with profit by no end of official and Whiggish historians . . . Speaking of certain contemporary humanists, of whom Erasmus was prince, he remarks: "How fanciful the imagination of those who were wont to accuse such men, to accuse any man exhibiting an enlightened spirit, and yet remaining a Catholic, of being a dissembler"! As things turned out, in any case, Henri of Navarre decided that Paris was well "worth a Mass", and so we see Montaigne presenting votive offerings at the Casa Sancta of Loretto, and taking the Sacrament on his deathbed with decorum, if without emphasis.

Yet for all his discreet career and edifying end, he was the first Frenchman of Letters who gave himself the task of bringing the spirit of free examination to bear on every sort of moral problem. His influence on his contemporaries, not to mention our own, has been incalculable and immense. Shakespeare's garnerings are mostly limited to a long monologue of old Gonzalo's in *The Tempest*, but another Elizabethan, John Marston, plagiarised from about ten of Montaigne's essays. A little later, Kenelm Digby did not hesitate to lift the beautiful phrase: "*Parce que c'était lui; parce que c'était moi*", applying it to one of his mistresses. Dryden did the same, more imaginatively, in his best play, *All for Love*. But generally, the Age of Enlightenment was not too kind to a pioneer who had accomplished so much graceful spadework, thanks to which the men of the Eighteenth Century were enabled to speak their minds on any question on earth or heaven. "Neither pure

nor correct", pontificates Voltaire, speaking on Montaigne's style before the Academy in 1746. And Horace Walpole, writing to Madame du Deffand from the Spa at Bath, observes: "I read the *Essais*, and bore myself even more than with this Town. It is the dotage of a true pedant, a rhapsody of commonplaces without construction. He and his Seneca kill themselves with learning how to die—the one thing in this world we are sure of accomplishing without learning."

"The Sixteenth Century," said Ste. Beuve, "is one of contradictions, an age of fanaticism and philosophy, of credulity and scepticism, of contrasts and combats. The great distinction of Montaigne in such a period is to have represented the very principle of moderation." Of course, there will always be those for whom the principle of moderation argues the absence of any principle at all. Michelet, for example, who, almost alone among historians has reclothed with flesh and blood the sumptuous mummy of dead History, is very severe with Montaigne. "For my part, my profound admiration for that exquisite writer will not prevent me from saying that I find in him, at each instant, a certain debilitated odour, like that of a sickbed, where the air insufficiently renewed, is imprinted with the melancholy perfumes of a pharmacy." And very nicely put, too! But for Michelet moderation was an equivalent for morality, for euthanasia. So was tolerance. So was that all-but-unique refusal on the part of Epicurus to take sides, to engage himself in the sanguinary rough-and-tumble of the interminable religious quarrel of his age. Like Romain Rolland, in a more recent connection, Montaigne was "above the torment", and hence for Michelet he was as good as dead. But it is no secret that Michelet, despite his vast genius, was simply the Catholic bigot *à rebours*, up side down, just as Mr. Belloc in our day, and in the same quarrel, is merely the Protestant fanatic up side down. They both foam at the mouth and fall into a kind of bellicose spluttering at sight of the enemy, doing the enemy very little damage in the long run, be it said. And one can well ask in conclusion: What was a man like Montaigne to do, confronted on one side or the other by the black-gowned sadists of Geneva or Edinburgh, the John Knox breed;

¹Historie de France. Vol. iv: La Lique et Henri IV

on the violent imbeciles of the Catholic League in the pay of the horrible Spain? Obviously he will cultivate his garden. This son of the dying Renaissance was wiser in his generation than all the opposed children of light. It is something to have been, as Walter Pater said of him, in the matter of justice and gentleness, "the solitary conscience of the age."

by Robert W. Babcock

A RACY LIFE OF STEELE

SIR RICHARD STEELE, by Willard Connely. New York and London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934. Pp. xii, 462.

Any American scholar who journeys to England will perforce sooner or later trek to the American University Union and there come face to face with the extremely vital author of this book on Steele. Somehow one would expect Mr. Connely to "do" Steele, even as he recently "did" Wycherley, for the "brawniness" of all three men would naturally draw them together. So Steele has at last achieved a sympathetic and, I shall add (though Mr. Connely may cry out a bit in agony at it), a distinctly scholarly biographer. It is high time Steele got one.

Mr. Connely narrates systematically but racily the "diphrelatic" career of Richard Steele, to borrow one of his more picturesque words. "Hollows of disappointment had always led him to hills of expectation," writes the biographer. "Sir Richard's bright faith in the betterment of things was sublime". In Paradise perhaps there may be no bailiffs.

An example of Mr. Connely's graphic style is most effective at the beginning of the book and lapses badly in the latter half. Consider Charterhouse: "Centuries had mottled her old walls of stone: heresy had sped across her sun-dials, chivalry breathed close to her leaded glass, betrayal whispered at her thresholds." Or per-

haps better: "Rain, sleet, and a loud midwinter wind whipped through the streets of London. It was a night late in January . . . Into these rather bothersome scenes walked a calm young man . . ." But the thing can become grotesque: "In practice, the word, 'income', for Dick Steele, bore no more relation to expenditure than a tomato to a toy balloon."

Like Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* by far the most effective passages of Mr. Connely's book are the various "characters", or descriptions, of the leading protagonists. For instance, this on Swift: "... the fulness of his owlsh cheeks seemed to make sharper the beaky lines of his nose. There was a hue of perpetual February about him; there was challenge, and a threat of triumph, in his steely black-browed fearless eyes, which popped out a little . . ." On Anthony à Wood: "... a snarling, peevish, graceless, detested, deaf old man, as sour as Charon and as libellous as Ther-sites." On Anne: "... a handsome though somewhat dowdy woman with black hair and blue eyes and hands as small as a child's . . . dull and sottish too, grave of mien and puffy of jowl . . ." Her husband: "... heavy-cheeked, heavy-lidded, and heavy-witted, with whites of eyes which showed too much, suggestive of boiled eggs . . ." Robert Walpole: "... red-faced, bull-necked, and walked like a farmer". George I: "... a dumpy little man, pale, awkward, fat but not gross, cheeks baggy and beery, square-faced as Steele himself, with a countenance more homespun than regal, eyes too big, pouches under them, and in their look—so far as they had any—a reminiscence of the leer of James the First." Finally the two friends themselves: "Addison the high-bred Englishman, so very erect, a thin young man with sensitive features, his face pinkish, his nose straight and long, the knuckles of his bony hands excellently white, . . . Steele the dusky Irishman . . . round and rubicund, perhaps an inch taller than Addison, but with a face like a bannock; a man whose chops, let him be shaved never so close, were a smudge of blue, whose nose was the very masque of comedy. . ."

Negatively, the most disappointing aspect of the book is the diminution of Mr. Connely's personally vital touch as the nar-

¹There are some very humorous anecdotes on pp. 125, 225, 227, 311, 420, and some startling vocabulary here and there: "diphrelatic" (p. 125), "dehisce" (p. 142), "aceldama" (p. 160), "vespine" (p. 245), "sabulous" (p. 312), "fuscous" (p. 315), "fimbriated" (p. 389), and "sempiternal" (p. 424).

native proceeds. Whole multitudes of quotations from Steele's letters may contribute to this. Superfluous attacks on both Swift and Pope irritate the present writer: why must these men be flayed merely to "whitewash" Steele? Sentimental comedy was by no means "a thing wholly new to the London stage" in 1703: Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* had appeared in 1696. "Pinkethman" is misspelled on p. 61, but correctly spelled elsewhere. At times Mr. Connely seems to slide over Steele's works too rapidly, quoting a brief scene or excerpt here and there. It is hard to conceive of Christopher Rich as "dizzy with joy" (p. 63) over anything, and especially after he has been just labelled "wheeling, apologetic, avaricious, elusive" on p. 59. Brackets would have helped *passim* in interpolation of names in the midst of quotations. The present writer has written an article attempting to prove that Swift never essentially deserted the Whigs (see p. 177) because he was never purely a Whig in the first place. Certainly the book should be dated in brackets at the top of each page—in spots it is extremely hard to follow chronologically. But these are all probably minor quibblings about a very good biography.

Mr. Connely—whether he likes the appellation or not—has proved himself an excellent scholar by his use of MSS. In the Bodleian, British Museum, and Huntington Library; Patent Rolls, Chancery Court Proceedings, contemporary newspapers, and the latest modern scholarship: for one detail, à la Macaulay, Mr. Connely called upon three recent books about Swift. There are ample "Notes" at the back of the book for each chapter—thereby avoiding the footnote evil in the text itself (there are no numbers referring to these "Notes"). Three times Mr. Connely corrects the great Aitken, and several modern scholars have been called upon for help: Miss Rae Blanchard, Dr. R. J. Allen, and Professor George Sherburn. All in all it is an imposing galaxy, and the last note at the end of the book is the most amusing of all. It should certainly inspire Mr. Shane Leslie to sit right down and write a book about "The Skull of Steele": in 1876 Steele's coffin was exhumed, and "The verger of St. Peter's, I was informed, exhibited Steele's skull for several days on a table in the sacristy, the skull being covered with a cloth, which the verger like a magician would lift dramatically, with the words, 'You are now going to see the Great Sir Richard Steele!'"

by *Everett Lee Hunt*

HUMANISM AND DOGMA

PAUL ELMER MORE AND AMERICAN CRITICISM. By Robert Shafer. Yale Press, 1935. Pp. 325.

Since the death of Irving Babbitt a number of critics have summarized his work and some have claimed for him the preëminent position among American humanists. Now comes Mr. Shafer with what he terms a commentary on the works of Paul Elmer More in support of the assertion that he is the greatest American critic,—nay more, he is greater than Arnold. The basis of this claim is laid in chapter one, on criticism, where by definition Eliot, Spingarn, Wilson and others become anti-critics, not only incapable themselves of criticism, but by their influence making it difficult for others. This chapter will, of course, provoke vigorous replies, but it deserves, I think, to rank along with Brownell's essay on the field and function of the critic. Having shown us the task of the critic in America, Mr. Shafer tells in some detail how by training and temperament Mr. More was equipped for his position of leadership in American thought. The narration does not always remain this side idolatry, but we need more such sympathetic interpretations of our thinkers if we are to understand them. The *Shelburne Essays* are interpreted and defended, their scholarship and balance praised, but Mr. Shafer seems to feel that these literary essays are, after all, only preliminary to the Greek studies; the Greek studies, in their turn, lead to the dualistic philosophy and a reconciliation of Hellenism and Christianity. Mr. Shafer as a Christian Platonist demands a divinity present in his world as the ultimate reality. Such a faith is the necessary basis of criticism; it is really this faith which makes Mr. More the greatest of our critics, even though he did not have it when he wrote most of his criticism.

Matthew Arnold quite consciously devoted himself to persuasion by charm, but he was greatly impressed by the account of Jesus denouncing the Pharisees. The Pharisees were obviously beyond

persuasion; it was not their conversion, but a strong impression on the faithful that Jesus aimed at. Mr. Shafer's volume should make a strong impression on the faithful. Just why so many of the humanists should scorn temperate discussion is something of a mystery; at any rate Mr. Shafer does not discuss, he commands us to make straight in the desert a highway for our God. But his voice lacks the authentic thrill; he does not really expect obedience. The humanists are quick enough to attack the defeatism that characterizes much contemporary philosophy, but they themselves are defeatist in this world of the ignorant many; they cannot face New York City, Middletown, or a State University. Their querulous attitude almost becomes a pose by which members of the scattered remnant may recognize each other.

All this I regret the more for the harm Mr. Shafer does to his own good cause. His conception of criticism might give intelligent direction to many scholars now devoting themselves to the more futile forms of research. It is the task of criticism, says Mr. Shafer,

to weigh premature generalizations, to guard as best it may against their passing for what they are not, and to keep steadily in view the practical knowledge of ourselves and of society which can be derived from the accumulated experience of the race. This experience is reflected in history, in literature, in philosophy, and in religion; and it includes what has also most recently been learned by scientific methods.

The difficulty of this very necessary conception is to keep alive the Aristotelian notion of the field of probability. The scientists arrange themselves in a hierarchy of certainty and frequently seem to regard the uncertain as the unimportant. To match the assurance with which they pronounce some generalizations, the humanists in their turn have to sanctify the past, but they destroy the wisdom of the ages by setting their own interpretation upon it and imposing this interpretation as a dogma. Dogma and science both may make wisdom either impossible or unnecessary. The wise man, as Isocrates wrote in protesting against Plato's quest for certainty, is one who, in an uncertain situation, best guesses what to do next. Dogma and science tend to replace wisdom with loyalty or routine. And yet science enlarges the realm of probability almost every time it solves a problem, by

creating more complex relationships. The field of the uncertain, where wisdom is our only guide, is not narrowing: it is broadening. This is the field of the critic. If the critic is blind to any sources of relevant knowledge, his judgment is impaired. Whenever humanist scholars assume the attitude of neglected guardians of rightful authority, they merely increase the neglect they dislike, and the judgments of the past do not receive their proper weight in the decisions of the present. We need more persuasive humanists, not to 'put over' the humanities, but to establish the proper balance in the minds of those whose critical judgments will control our future.

Paul Elmer More and the late Irving Babbitt have devoted themselves seriously to criticism as distinguished from the necessary but limited technical discussions of the artists' studio. If they have occasionally given wrong answers, they have at least raised the right questions. Their work will receive something of the recognition it deserves when the irritation over their assertion of authority has passed. But Mr. Shafer's acute and vigorous book, I fear, may increase the irritation and delay the recognition. It is interesting to know that Platonic dualism prepared the way for Mr. More's later acceptance of Christ as the Incarnate Word, but we may trust that the influence of Socrates and Jesus will not depend exclusively upon his method to belief. Mr. Shafer button-holes us, explains Christian dualism, tells us that so wise and learned a man as Mr. More accepts it, and that we must, too, if we are to save civilization. It is, he says, true to experience.

Any singer who has studied with various teachers knows how true to experience are the many figurative explanations of voice production. These accounts have little to do with the physics and physiology of the head, throat, and lungs as a voice mechanism. They are more successful, oftentimes, in producing singers than are more scientific descriptions. Quite opposed accounts may seem equally true to experience, and they often produce equally good singers. Let us agree that wise men may find in Christianity a religious support for the Socratic inner check, and that such a discovery may give them peace. But must we be held to this as *the* meaning of the study and criticism of the world's literature? Arnold was wiser than some of his successors; he did not link his culture to dogma. Culture was the foe of anarchy because it

offered a way of developing all sides of our natures harmoniously. If the study of the literature of the past is to be officially interpreted as meaning that the inner check is the central doctrine of ethics, that movements to secure a more equitable distribution of property are irrelevant or pernicious, and that human ideals of certain inquiring minds are to have the authority of Ultimate Reality, then the influence of official interpreters will decline still further.

Humanism needs to be saved from its friends. Literature can go with us through trial and error, it can give us standards for judging the success or failure of our experiments by showing us the full scope of the good life, and its critics have other duties than telling us not to go near the water. Mr. More's work is well worthy of a critical volume and Mr. Shafer's exposition of More's development is admirable. But Mr. Shafer has treated Mr. More as some of our humanists always treat literature,—as a source of doctrine. Literature will survive this, but our dualistic humanists may not.

by W. E. Harrison

BRITISH CULTURE IN RUSSIA

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND CULTURE IN RUSSIA (1553-1840). By Ernest J. Simons. Cambridge; Harvard University Press. 1935. \$3.50.

Cultural relations between England and Russia began in earnest during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and of Ivan the Terrible; they originated in trade, and their instigators were the bold Elizabethan mariners. Ever since, English ideas and institutions have permeated Russia without abatement. Their influence in the reign of Peter the Great, for example, is notable. While he was making his famous Grand Tour of Western Europe, Peter spent some time

as a shipwright at Deptford, where he acquired an admiration for the English Navy. He was ambitious of building a Russian navy inspired by that prototype. He was fascinated by nearly everything English, though as the Czar of all the Russias his Anglomania could hardly be as unrestrained as that of Kipling's lines:

Blessed be the English, and all their ways and works;
Cursed be the Infidels, Heretics, and Turks!

By ukase he commanded all his courtiers to dress in the English manner. Catherine the Great was also an Anglophile, and it is one of the especial merits of Dr. Simmons' book to have stressed that point, for she is only too commonly regarded as a thorough-going Francophile, like her contemporary, Frederick the Great. In 18th century Russia, as we should have guessed, Locke and Newton were known to the intelligentsia, even if knowledge of the two was halting at times, and nearly always had been transmitted by French intermediaries. Shakespeare, also, is too great ever to be ignored by any country introduced to the glories of Western European culture: at the beginning of the 19th century the Russian General, Ivan Alexandrovitch Velyaminov, translated *Othello* into prose from the French version of Jean Francois Ducis.

English Romanticism, through Scott and Byron, penetrated Russia most deeply, although Sterne the sentimentalist was assiduously imitated. The Waverley novels invigorated Russian historical fiction, and Byron's stock-in-trade can be found in Lermontov and even in the great Pushkin. Dr. Simmons writes: "After Byron no figure in English literature caught the popular imagination or won the devotion of Russian writers to the same extent. Influences continued, to be sure, but they were of a superficial and passing nature. Russia no longer had to go to school to Western Europe." By 1841 Tolstoi, Dostoievski, and Turgenev were making their literary débuts, so that Russia was ready to discharge, at compound interest, her debt to England and her other European creditors, who had helped her in her grave cultural distress.

Many curious facts are to be found in Dr. Simmons's book, such as the news that *Tom Jones* is a favourite among Soviet youths, a translation of it appearing as late as 1931.

To the difficult task of making the first comprehensive study in English of the literary relations between England and Russia—a field which can still yield much to the venturesome investigator—Dr. Simmons, who is an instructor and tutor at Harvard, brings the requisite gifts: profound learning and clarity of style. One wishes the book were longer.

by Lodwick Hartley

NOVELIST OF VIOLENCE

DOSTOEVSKY: A LIFE. By Avrahm Yarmolinsky. Harcourt, Brace & Company. New York. 1934. Pp. 447.

In setting out to write a new biography of the epileptic and neurotic Russian genius who became a colossus of world literature, Mr. Yarmolinsky was faced by no inconsiderable task. The facts of Dostoevsky's life had already been ably assembled and interpreted by no less capable biographers than E. H. Carr, André Gide, Julius Meier-Graefe, and Stefan Zweig. Dostoevsky, like Shelley, is not the type of subject that can be adequately interpreted by an appeal to facts: the outward details of his life most frequently belie the inner man. Therefore, even with several excellent biographies of recent date before him, Mr. Yarmolinsky saw an opportunity for a reinterpretation of this strange and fascinating genius in the light of modern psychology, of the man's own self-revelation in his work, and of the background of a changing Russia against which the novelist moved. The biography that such an approach produced in every way justifies the method. It is a rich, powerful, and dramatic book.

Fyodor Dostoevsky, broad of shoulder and short of stature, presents not only in his physique but in his mind that strange

combination of weakness and strength which is not unusual in genius. From his birth his life was doomed to upheaval. His father was an unhappy army doctor in Moscow whose splenetic outbursts and morbid suspiciousness deprived his entire family of domestic peace.

We follow the novelist quickly through his childhood until we see him emerge a pale, introspective boy at a school of military engineering in St. Petersburg. Here he burned with the passion of violent friendships, lived in a turmoil of thought and emotions, and succeeded so ill in his work that at a final examination he is said to have submitted a plan for a fortress without providing for gates. He deserted his position as an army draughtsman to enter literature as a profession. Although modern critics call *Poor Folk* a piece of crude melodrama, the story with which he made his literary début won for him the attention of the critic, Belinsky. But the beginning of his literary career was not auspicious. The recognition of his genius was by no means over-flattering, and the radicalism of the Belinsky circle, into which he was drawn, was eventually to cause his sad Siberian exile.

The gruesomeness of his Siberian prison experience Dostoevsky himself has recorded in *The House of the Dead*. The story of his singular love affair with Marya Dmitrievna, who was to become his first wife, and that of his struggle after marriage to earn a living by his pen continue the record of his suffering. A taste of success came when he entered the field of journalism with his adored brother, Mikhail, but after a few years the magazine which they founded came to ill fortune.

From this point the tale of Dostoevsky's life is one of increasing turbulence, punctuated only now and then by periods of half-calm. The affair with Polina Suslova ended in bitter disillusionment; Mme. Dostoevsky died; the author's disease increased in violence; Mikhail died. Nothing seemed left but madness or sudden death.

Something like emotional stability came, if only temporarily, with Anna Grigoryevna, the stenographer who became the second Mme. Dostoevsky and who with magnificent courage saw her husband through the struggles that marked the rest of his life. After his second marriage the movements of the novelist are hard to trace. With almost demoniac energy he moved from Russia

to Germany to Italy and back again, writing furiously, gambling with an insane passion, and plunging his family into the depths of poverty and suffering. Yet he was able to produce in this period *The Idiot* and *Crime and Punishment*, two of his imperishable masterpieces. It was only toward the end of his life that the fever of existence became less fitful, but there was never any real peace. With *The Brothers Karamazov* came the peak of his genius and long-delayed recognition. Death was soon to follow.

In correlating the life and works of the master, the present biographer has succeeded admirably in shedding new light on both. As an artist, Dostoevsky is supreme in his graphic psychological analysis of human mind and motive. The extent of his influence in this field is at present difficult to estimate. It is patent, however, that to the Russian genius the German expressionists, the French surrealists, and our own stream-of-consciousness novelists must bend the knee. In spite of his firm belief in the power of love in the universe, Dostoevsky is a novelist of violence, of crime, and of abnormality.

This divergence between personal belief and artistic accomplishment is characteristic of the thought of the man. In many places he exhibits the paradox of one who thinks strongly without thinking clearly. His social and political philosophy is an excellent example of his constant wrestling with inconsistencies. We find him at the same time championing the rights of the proletariat and attempting to defend the idea of monarchy. His Christian socialism is far from the atheistic communism toward which Russia was even then moving. He insisted upon the idea that social betterment depends upon the regeneration of the individual rather than on reformed institutions. Therefore, Dostoevsky is not a prophet of the new Russia as we know it. In fact, communist critics, as Mr. Yarmolinsky has put it, "are apt to pronounce his work safe only for minds rendered immune to the toxins of a petty-bourgeois individualism by a strong class consciousness".

by *S. Ichiye Hayakawa*

STAINED GLASS ATTITUDES

THE FOREGROUND OF AMERICAN FICTION. By Harry Hartwick. New York. The American Book Company. 1934. Pp. xvi, 447.

To Mr. Hartwick, the novel is a direct function of social forces, to be studied in relation to cultural, political, and economic history; the artist lives in no vacuum. By frequent summaries of the social background of America, we are reminded that non-literary forces did exert an influence on literature; unlike many critics, Mr. Hartwick pays more than a lip service to the idea of literature as a product of society. With great neatness and ingenuity, he quotes social historians, speeches of politicians, statements of scientists, and juxtaposes them with accounts of the ideas motivating the novelists he deals with.

In 1893 the Columbian Exposition at Chicago, with its theatrical splendors, opened on the eve of a great railway strike and the march of Coxey's Army . . . No false display of wealth could hide the true situation. Legislation had become a rank exchange of favors . . . Workingmen scowled at the perfumed tribe known in metropolitan society as 'The Four Hundred'. Curses were let fly at the 'gold bugs' of the East, Wall Street, and the 'trusts' . . . Nervousness was heightened by the plight of the farmer. Freight rates, grain speculators, and rent had almost reduced him to a state of peonage. And despair was accentuated by the fact that thirty per cent of the people in this country had shifted to the city. From 1850 to 1900 our population had increased over fifty millions . . . our natural resources were approaching an end; corporations had seized a monopoly of business; high tariffs were being levied for the benefit of a few key industries, to the detriment of the consumer . . . Civil liberties were being violated; 'third degree' methods were put to use by the police, free speech was curtailed, professors were discharged for propagating 'unpopular' ideas, and radicals were deported . . . Fights were raging over temperance, feminism, and the Negro; and some of our most talented spirits there had fastened a dawning misanthropy that may be found reflected

in the last stories of Mark Twain and *The Education of Henry Adams*. (Pp. 171-3).

I quote at length, because such paragraphs are rare in literary histories, except in the works of critics who have a definite political axe to grind. Without by any means being blind to the social blindness of many of the authors he speaks of, Mr. Hartwick displays no political partisanship, and thereby avoids the egregious error of judging the merit of books by the extent of their protest against social injustice, or the warmth of their sympathy with an oppressed class. In his whole section "New Worlds for Old", in which he traces "Frenzied Finance", the Goulds and the Vanderbilts, the Populist Party, the rise of large-scale advertising, the wages of industrial workers, the victimizing of the farmer by railways and land speculators, the state of literature in the "holy league" of the entrenched eastern magazines, the rise of trades-unionism, there is a swift and impressive amassing of evidence drawn from a wide variety of sources—the evidence is gathered in such a way that Hamlin Garland's disillusionment, Upton Sinclair's anger, Sinclair Lewis' contempt, the rise of Marxist and Socialist literature, the anarchism of John Dos Passos, are actually to be seen growing inevitably out of the background in which they flourish. No other treatment of the contemporary American novel, so far as I am aware, has succeeded so well in connecting what happened in life with what happened in literature. The result is a historical account that is intensely dramatic.

If the word "dramatic" seems a strong word to apply to a work of literary history, the reason is that few literary critics share with Mr. Hartwick so keen a sense of the vital connection between literature and life. A peculiarity of his expository style (perhaps irritating at first, but not hard to get accustomed to) is probably a product of this dramatic sense. His chapters, and even the subdivisions of chapters, sometimes individual paragraphs, have headings: short, biting headings such as might be written by an inspired headline-writer: "Grace Under Pressure", "Ballots or Bullets", "Men with the Bark On", "Laws as Wings", "A Reverse Columbus" [Henry James], "The Babel of the Psyche" [Sherwood Anderson], etc., etc. After one becomes accustomed to them, they begin to give the whole book a feeling of rapidly moving,

dramatic episodes—a feeling thoroughly in keeping with the lively movement of his argument and thought. I have spoken mostly of the section “New Worlds for Old”, but in his treatment of Crane, Norris, Dreiser, and the naturalistic tradition, Mr. Hartwick shows the same lively connection between literature and life. His chapter on the “escapists”, as well as that on the “humanists” is vivid, clear-cut, and swift. The objectivity with which he deals with his material always gives the reader the impression that he is dealing fairly with his authors, since each of them has the opportunity of speaking for himself.

Mr. Hartwick was hardly fair to himself in permitting *The Foreground of American Fiction* to be arranged and published as a textbook, because his survey deserves a far wider audience than the classroom, where somnolent youth, always more interested in grade-points than in books, will give it unwilling and perfunctory attention. The textbook method demanded thorough documentation and orderly presentation, and these are all to the good; they are probably a help to the student, and certainly a great help to the general reader who is always gratified, sometimes even delighted, to know where Mr. Hartwick has gone for his evidence. Nevertheless, although Mr. Hartwick has succeeded in turning most of his obstacles into helps, his book suffers from being a textbook, because it has prevented him from expanding further his personal opinions. The “objectivity” demanded in this method is useful, insofar as it makes him state his definitions of “naturalism”, “humanism”, and “reformism” clearly. But it is hard to tell where he stands himself from the few clues he gives. His enthusiastic account of reformist literature shows him to be sympathetic to many of the endeavors of the socialist and communist in literature. His categories are, however, those of a humanist; apparently Mr. Hartwick is deeply read in and much influenced by the humanist point of view. He shows himself to be in agreement with the humanist in regarding literature as selection; he is opposed to “naturalism” as it is now manifested in Dreiser and Anderson, and fallen into a *cul de sac* in Faulkner; he is obviously distressed by the ethical flaccidity that has overtaken Lewis in his later novels, *Ann Vickers* and *Work of Art*; he treats the so-called humanist novelists, Henry James, Edith

Wharton, Willa Cather, Thornton Wilder, and Dorothy Canfield last of all, as if they constituted in some way a resolution of the unsolved problems raised by the naturalist and the reformist. Nevertheless, he surprises us somewhat at the end by expressing the belief, in a very brief conclusion, that the hope for the future is in a "new naturalism", in which he expects to see "a working synthesis" between the soul, unjustly treated by present naturalists, and the body, unjustly treated by the humanists. "And perhaps it is to art", he concludes, "rather than religion or science, that [man] must turn for this marriage of body and soul." But Mr. Hartwick's conclusion, especially interesting in its context, is all too briefly condensed into a page. It is a grave disappointment, and it leaves the reader feeling that a great deal of interesting discussion has been withheld from him. I am inclined to think that Mr. Hartwick is right in expecting little more from the humanist tradition in novelists; but what is it about our humanists that prevents our looking to them for the future? Is it that they represent an already lost cause for gentility? Is it inevitable that they have to be more or less genteel? And where is this "new naturalism" coming from? Certainly, as Mr. Hartwick shows, not from the present naturalism! From D. H. Lawrence, then? Or is the dignity of man to be re-established in the light of the anthropocentric views indicated by some of the newer scientists? And why does not the lively tide of "proletarian" literature offer Mr. Hartwick any occasion for speculation?

But these unanswered questions do not detract from the value or the usefulness of the book. It was meant to be a survey, and it is an excellent one, bringing us right down to the middle of 1934. Perhaps I am complaining because I want it to be something that it was never intended to be. But that is Mr. Hartwick's fault: had he not written so interestingly and well, there would have been no complaint. He has given us much to look forward to in his future work.

by E. M. Kayden

HISTORY WITHOUT PHILOSOPHY

FREEDOM VERSUS ORGANIZATION. By Bertrand Russell. New York. W. W. Norton & Company. 1934. Pp. 471.

Mr. Russell has set out to unify in a comprehensive philosophy of history the processes of change in the economic and social culture of the West in 1814-1914, "to trace the opposition and interaction of two main causes of change . . . the belief in *freedom* which was common to Liberals and Radicals, and the necessity of *organization* which arose through industrial and scientific technique". He treats separately the economic democracy of the Benthamites, liberalism, socialism, nationalism, and the rise of monopoly in industry and finance. Throughout he has aimed to explain the past, to clarify the genesis of our modern civilization in terms of causes, to formulate laws of sociological change, and particularly, to avoid simplification, such as the economic determinism of Marx or the great-man theory of history of Carlyle. But in his fear of the frying pan of simplification he has fallen into the fire of falsification. He writes, for instance, "Wm. Pitt tried to destroy the French Revolution, and instead produced Napoleon. Napoleon tried to destroy Prussia, but produced Fichte, who led to Bismarck. Bismarck, by trying to destroy France, made the *revanche* inevitable; and the *revanche* led to Hitler." Throughout, his personalities, upon whom he lavishes all his resources of graceful, lucid and witty writing, appear not as the centers of historic and cultural processes but as *deus ex machina*. And, therefore, his philosophy of history remains unwritten.

Mr. Russell has also prescribed a cure for the West suffering from the dualism of freedom and organization, namely, "world-wide economic organization" and "public ownership of the organizations that give economic power." But nowhere does he propose a method of achievement. What price collectivism? But, in fact, Mr. Russell does not appear aware how important the question is if one is to judge him by his criticism of the Marxian technique of social change, if one should take seriously his affirm-

ation that in dealing with practical affairs a metaphysics of history is irrelevant. There is possibly insufficient evidence to support the Marxian philosophy of history, but to declare that Marxism does not matter, after prescribing collectivism for the patient, is proof of academic timidity or political obtuseness or spiritual irresponsibility. Mr. Russell's own appeal to "efficiency" as a resolving and reconciling social force is of no better recommendation than the spacious evangelistic appeal to "goodness". Marxism is a metaphysics of history, a plan of action, and a system of guidance and re-direction of our socio-economic order; it cannot be brushed aside by a witticism, by denial, alone. Moreover, the Marxian conception of economic determinism is that its metaphysics would outlast the present economic system which has stimulated the growth of socialism, that in an era of liberated human activities social life would no longer be conditioned by the laws of economic necessity. It would seem then that Marxism is a metaphysics in competition with Christianity for the loyalties of mankind. Since Mr. Russell has affirmed that the Christian metaphysics is a real obstacle to Marxism, it is doubly strange that he should have altogether avoided the important issue of collectivism. He prescribes the medicine, but does not give a tinker's damn about the patient.

Yearly Subscription, \$3.00

Single Number, 75 cents

Sewanee Review

[Founded 1891]

A Quarterly of Life and Letters

EDITED BY

WILLIAM S. KNICKERBOCKER

October-December, 1935

EUGENE O'NEILL'S SYMBOLISM *Edd W. Parks*

METAPHYSICAL IMAGERY *Robert L. Sharp*

T. S. ELIOT ON ARNOLD *M. L. S. Loring*

MONTAIGNE *Cuthbert Wright*

COLLEGE SPORTSMANSHIP *Henry S. Pritchett*

MORE THAN INTELLIGENCE *Arthur Morgan*

PUBLISHED BY
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH
SEWANEE, TENNESSEE

Entered at the postoffice at Sewanee, Tenn., as second-class matter



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH SEWANEE, TENNESSEE



Opened in 1868. Located at Sewanee, Tennessee, on the plateau of the Cumberland Mountains, 2,000 feet above the level of the sea. Sewanee has a national reputation as a health resort all the year round.

The Departments of the University are:

SCIENTIFIC,
ACADEMIC,
THEOLOGICAL

The scholastic year opens in September, and is divided into two semesters.

For catalogues and other information, address:

BENJAMIN F. FINNEY,
or THE REGISTRAR. *Vice-Chancellor.*



The Sewanee Military Academy

prepares boys for this and other Universities and for business. For catalogue and other information, address

MAJ.-GEN. WM. R. SMITH, U.S.A., RETIRED,
Sewanee, Tenn. *Superintendent.*



THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

OF SEWANEE, TENNESSEE

